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NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

CLANDESTINE ARAB 'LIBERATION' GROUP FOUNDED IN COLOMBIA

Bogota CROMOS in Spanish 15 Dec 81 pp 20-23

[Article by Ligia Riveros: "Arab Terrorism Arrives in Colombia"]

[Text] A man with a Central American accent called CROMOS and claimed to have some important journalistic material for the magazine. The next day, the call was repeated and an appointment was set up. The instructions entailed boarding a flight to Pereira, from which they took us to a certain location in the country to inform us on the activities and intentions of a new clandestine group that will operate in Colombia, training shock forces for the war in the Middle East. This is the first news concerning the new organization consisting of Latin American Arabs who entered the country via the Gulf of Darien, and who are seeking to carry their plans to the final consequences.

Known date: 6 December

Uncertain appointment: Avianca's next to last flight bound for Pereira.

Code: for me to appear dressed in red.

Despite the fact that it had been previously agreed that I was to appear alone in the Pereira airport coffee shop, I arrived with Jorge Torres, one of the magazine's photographers, and we sat down to wait. An hour later, at 2100 hours, we heard over the loudspeaker, "Telephone call for Ligia Riveros." Through the mouthpiece I recognized the same voice that had called CROMOS, when he said: "Who is the man with the blue jacket and briefcase?" Terrified, I answered, "He is a fellow worker. His name is Jorge Torres. You can check his identity on the magazine's banner." "All right," he said, "wait for instructions." And he hung up.

Fifteen minutes later, a man with a briefcase who had been sitting behind us closed the book that he was pretending to read, stood up and in passing brushed against our table, saying in an almost imperceptible tone: "Follow me." We took a taxi, and got off at the intersection between the airport and the highway. "You must wait," he ordered. I touched his briefcase and realized that it was heavy. I said to him, "What are you carrying there?" Silence. We learned later that it was dynamite. The man, who was young, with a curved nose, wearing jeans and a light shirt, was visibly nervous, and was chewing gum. A dark Simca went by us and, without stopping, slowed down. They opened the back door from inside, and motioned to us. We jumped

into the car. In front, beside the driver, who never spoke nor turned around, a dark man 30 years of age, with a mustache and kinky hair, said with a marked Central American accent, "Stoop down," and covered us with a jacket that reeked of tobacco. All that we had was questions: Who were they? What did they want? Why so much silence? An hour later, when we were on the open highway, he ordered us: "Get up;" and ended in a sharp tone: "Your papers!" When he learned that we really were journalists, he identified himself: "We are from the commando group backing the Arab cause. We are seeking the unity of the people. Our movement is made up of Latin American Arabs."

"How strange," I told him, "last week a meeting of Jews in Bogota to denounce the repression in Russia came to an end." He brusquely interrupted me: "Don't express opinions about Jews. Confine yourself to questions."

Suspicious of Jorge Torres' silence, the Central American asked him: "What is your role here?" "I am a photographer." Addressing me, he scolded: "Ligia, we warned you that photos were forbidden." I tested my powers of persuasion, but only succeeded in eliciting the comment, "We shall see whether we may be somewhat flexible in this case."

During the 4 hour drive, amid uncomfortable stooping and rising when people came and went, we held our breath every time a contact was made. Upon driving by bars, all we heard was a song by Raul Santi, one popular song after another; and on the road we noticed the scent of our coffee. Suddenly, the car came to a dead halt. Despite the heat, the Central American pulled up the zipper on his jacket, hung a small bag over his shoulder and said: "We have arrived."

We entered a house in wrecked condition. Inside there was only a wobbly table, a tile floor and a hall. The walls had disappeared. The man whistled and, like an echo, several whistles were heard simultaneously, accompanied by the beams from several flashlights. "We are covered. Don't worry. We shall respect your physical integrity." He left us alone a few moments, while he issued instructions. Then, slowly, almost counting each step, he gave a nod and opened the dialog by saying: "Ask questions, but be concrete."

With the Ringleader of the No 4 Latin American Backup Commando Group

Without light, only the flame from the match every time the Central American lit a cigarette, and with questions and answers like machine-gun fire, the interview lasted until dawn.

[Question] What is your name?

[Answer] Liberation commander.

[Question] What are you looking for in Colombia?

[Answer] Backing, backing from all those who believe in the cause of Arab and Palestinian liberation.

[Question] How long have you been in Colombia?

[Answer] Three months.

[Question] By what route did you enter the country?

[Answer] Via Panama; through the Gulf of Darien, to be exact.

[Question] With how many people?

No answer.

[Question] Who are the members of your commando group?

[Answer] Mainly Latin American Arabs.

[Question] Where were you born?

No answer.

[Question] Your parents?

[Answer] They are Syrians.

[Question] Why did you choose Colombia?

[Answer] Without becoming involved in international politics, or the politics of your country, because that is not up to us, we must say that Colombia is one of the countries most open to any type of foreigner who arrives.

[Question] Does your liberation movement in support of the Arab cause cover other countries, or does it exist only in Colombia?

[Answer] The coverage is total. We have different command groups in all the Latin American countries. The unity of the Arab people is our primary goal.

[Question] Please answer me exactly: What countries are included in your commando group?

[Answer] It is not my commando group; it is the commando group of the Arab people, and it has extensive coverage, as I have already told you. We here in Colombia are the fourth, and they exist in various Latin American countries, such as Venezuela, Panama, Ecuador and Peru, among others.

[Question] I understand that you are the ringleader of the No 4 commando group operating in Colombia. It is clear that each country has its chief for the various commando groups. Who and where is the leader of this movement to back the Arab cause?

No answer.

[Question] What does it mean to you to have come to Colombia, a country so far from the Middle East, from your roots and from the liberation that you desire?

[Answer] Unity can be acquired only through the conscientization of the Arab people themselves throughout the entire world. In many places, in many countries, there are Arabs who really do not understand the all-importance of unity. We are struggling to have them join us, on the basis of their nationality and on the basis of the nation in which they were born. For example, if it were in Venezuela, to have them feel that they are Venezuelan Arabs, so that they may really command respect for the cause that we are defending through our liberation movement.

Training Camp in Colombia

[Question] Exactly what has your work been in Colombia, during the 3 months that this commando group has been in the country?

[Answer] There are a great many people in Colombia of Arab descent, as is the case all over the world. But it is not only the Arabs who sympathize with our cause. The No 4 commando group has recruited Colombians (we were to talk with two of them later) who love the Arab cause. We have both male and female personnel, who are being trained for the time of the great war, to fight on the side of the Arab armies.

[Question] Does that mean that you have training camps in the country?

[Answer] Affirmative.

[Question] How many? Where?

[Answer] One, and I cannot tell you where it is located, because of security.

[Question] How did the weapons enter?

No answer.

[Question] What type of weapons? Where were they manufactured?

[Answer] More modern than those used by the Colombian Army.

[Question] How many people are there?

No answer.

[Question] Are there women?

[Answer] There are Arabs of different nationalities, and also Colombian men and women who have proven to be excellent students.

[Question] Are any of them in any way associated with the guerrilla movements in Colombia, or have they been?

[Answer] No, we prefer that those who become members of our commando groups not have any association with this type of struggle. We prefer people between 17 and 30 years of age.

[Question] How do you recruit the Colombians?

[Answer] We never use pressure. They are the ones who voluntarily join, because they are familiar with the cause that we are defending, and think that it is worth the trouble to fight for it.

[Question] Describe a day in the training camp.

[Answer] The day usually begins at 0200 hours with gymnastics, and later hiking, and military training. There are discussions of the Arab cause. We often tune in the few news facilities that we have, such as the radio.

[Question] What type of radio?

[Answer] A powerful shortwave one. Now you can see how things are. The Americans are somewhat good for that. We also find out what is going on through the Arab broadcasts.

They Were Born in Managua and Are Independent of the PLO

[Question] Do you receive instructions from the Arabs in the East? Do you have anything to do with the PLO?

[Answer] From the very outset, our organization has been totally separate from the PLO on the organizational chart. We are seeking first of all the unity of the Arab people. When we are united in all the camps, and when that great attacking army is ready to bring us in confrontation with the imperialists, then we shall be able to say that the entire force is united in a single cause. For the present, we are independent.

[Question] How and where did the commando movement in support of the Arab cause come into existence?

[Answer] It came into existence in 1975, in Managua.

[Question] Why in Nicaragua?

[Answer] Because at that time the Nicaraguan Arabs wanted our country to have a lasting peace, and that there be none of that dismemberment. This idea was instilled there, and we began the great movement on a worldwide scale. After Nicaragua, we went to El Salvador. If I am not mistaken, General Romero was in power. It was our lot to witness the great slaughter of 29 July 1975 in the famous "country of smiles." Those were the things that prompted us to reconsider, to think: In the Middle East there are support, force and shock commando groups, but on the Latin American level we are completely unprotected and helpless. It was then that the idea of the backup commando groups in these Latin American countries acquired more force.

We Are Not Barbarians

[Question] The Arabs have a reputation for being terrorists, for being violent, for not giving in to anyone or anything. People fear the Arabs.

[Answer] Every type of struggle through the ages has been hard. They really consider us to be atrocious because of the decisions that we make, because we are radical; but we are not barbarians. It is merely circumstances which make humans barbarous. If we observe events through the ages, the Americans were barbarians in Vietnam, and so were the Nicaraguans in achieving their liberation from the Somoza regime, against that tyranny which threatened to become endless. We Arabs are being taken for common criminals and for the commandos of the brotherhood themselves.

[Question] What are the commandos of the brotherhood?

[Answer] They are ultrarightwing groups comprised of people who have sold the entire Arab cause for wretched banknotes. They are people without a country, for whom one cannot have any kind of consideration, because they have betrayed their country, their religion, and their race, and they really cannot exist among the Arab people.

[Question] Financed by whom?

[Answer] By Jewish imperialists and American imperialists. And they keep them in the Arab regimes to put up opposition, that opposition which befits all governments, but which in this case is detrimental, because it is not nationalistic but rather imported, with the deserters and all those who are betraying the Arab people.

[Question] Specifically, of what do you accuse the commandos of the brotherhood?

[Answer] Of attacks such as the one committed recently in Damascus, with a car bomb which killed over 100 Syrians and left a large number wounded. In other words, the first operation assassinated their own brothers for the cause of foreign imperialism.

[Question] How do you punish that betrayal?

[Answer] It is no mystery to anyone. If necessary, even dying.

[Question] And even killing?

[Answer] It is only logical: one dies in wars. If you don't kill, they kill you.

[Question] How did it happen to Sadat, a man who wanted peace?

[Answer] It was the very high price he had to pay in order to achieve the unity of the Arab people. Sadat should have taken into account the views of the other Arabs when signing any document with the Jews. Sadat did not consult with other Arab countries, and paid for his mistake, because the Camp David Peace Treaty has not actually brought any good results for the Arab people.

'We Shall Not Carry Out Violent Acts in Colombia'

[Question] Don't you think that when this news reaches the public you will be the ones harmed?

[Answer] We would have to make ourselves known some day. Understandably, after you publicize this meeting the tracking of us will begin. But you as journalists must be sincere in reporting that we shall not intervene in Colombian politics. Our mission, throughout the Latin American region, is to attain the integration of the Arab people. We are not engaged at present in any type of violent action to be carried out on Colombian territory.

The Central American threw the last cigarette on the tile floor and stamped on it angrily. Then he gave a whistle which we could scarcely hear, but which caused the flashlights to operate again in the gloom, with intermittent lights, as if they were sending messages in Morse code. Half an hour later, it began to dawn. On the return trip the chief of the No 4 commando group operating in Colombia told us about his life: that he began fighting at the age of 15; that he fought beside Commander Zero in Nicaragua; that years later he was tortured in El Salvador under a zinc roof with a constant temperature of 34 degrees, in a room with 300 light bulbs; that they applied the "eye-opener" to him, a kind of ring which does not allow one to blink; and that a Sandinist commando saved him from being shot. He described it without distress and without changing the tone of his voice, and then concluded by saying: "They are the consequences of the struggle."

Somewhere on the highway the Latin American Arab got out while the car was moving. Three hours later, the driver let us off near the Hotel Zoratama, in the middle of downtown Pereira.

2909

CSO: 3010/619

DOCTORS REPORT STEADILY DETERIORATING PUBLIC HEALTH

Zurich NEUE ZUERCHER ZEITUNG in German 22 Jan 82 p 2

[Article: "Bombing Of Hospitals In Afghanistan. A Report From 'Doctors Without Frontiers'"]

[Text] The French medical organization "Doctors Without Frontiers" at a press conference in Paris last Wednesday accused the Soviet Union of having gone over to pure terror methods in their military campaign in Afghanistan by bombing civilian targets. The organization, which sets as its goal medical assistance to the populations of crisis areas, particularly in Third World countries, has been sending medical teams totalling over 50 doctors to Afghanistan for more than a year. The French doctors operate "underground" since the authorities in Kabul have refused to grant them entry visas. Six young physicians, all of whom have been working under these conditions in Afghanistan for several months, have now given reports to the press of the bombings of three hospitals under their direction by Soviet helicopters and aircraft. The members of the organization stated that they had not until now made their activity in Afghanistan public and had assumed that there was a tacit agreement between them and the Soviets and that the Red Army had been tolerating their aid to the civilian population.

According to the doctors' eye witness report hospitals or buildings used as medical centers had been bombed by the Soviets late last October and early November in the Panjshir Valley and in the Provinces of Nangarhar and Ghazni. In all three instances these were isolated structures without strategic significance for the Afghan resistance movement. Two bombing attacks took place on days when the medical teams were about to be relieved, with the result that more doctors than usual were at the locations. None of the French physicians, however, was injured. The organization "Doctors Without Frontiers" underscored the fact that they will continue their work in Afghanistan without assuming any longer the earlier tacit agreement and that they will now openly attack the Soviet military intervention, believing that public opinion represents the only means of influencing the Soviets.

The representatives of the organization, on the basis of their experience, now believe that the Red Army has recently begun a new tactic in Afghanistan. In the first phase of their incursion the Soviets employed armored units against rebels, thereby incurring heavy losses. In a second phase they contented themselves with maintaining control of the more important towns and highways in the hope that time would bring about a weakening of the resistance and allow the pacification of the

country. The new third phase is characterized by massive bombing of civilian targets with the intention of terrorising the population. According to the French physicians the change demonstrates the total failure of all previous efforts to gain control of the country and has been undertaken in a form which, in contrast to armored attacks, is relatively risk-free for the Soviets.

The doctors confirmed reports that the Afghani resistance controls some 90 percent of the country; several of the medical teams were able to operate as close as 40 km from Kabul. They indicated that the chief task in caring for the civilian population was the combatting of tuberculosis and infectious diseases, which have become rampant as a result of the war and the poor food supply situation. While a minimum of basic foodstuffs seems to be assured, women and children lack nutrition adequate in vitamins and protein. The spokesman for the organization confirmed that the Soviets are employing small-sized mines, camouflaged as rocks or implements, whose explosive force is not sufficient to kill its victims but merely inflicts severe wounds. All of them were of the opinion that the Red Army's new phase of terrorist warfare was aimed not so much at the resistance fighters as it was at the non-combatant civilian population.

9878

CSO: 4620/23

RESOLUTIONS OF FLN CENTRAL COMMITTEE EXAMINED

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 25-26 Dec 81 p 3

[Text] Algiers (APS)--Following subcommittees' preparation of documents concerning agenda items and debates held in the General Assembly or by committees, the Central Committee of the National Liberation Front [FLN] Party held the final assembly of its sixth session on Thursday at about 11 am with President Chadli Bendjedid presiding.

During that meeting, the Central Committee adopted the following decisions and resolutions: resolution concerning the place and role of the private sector in the national economy; decision on holding elections within the party and elected assemblies; decision concerning the party's 1982 budget; decision on auditing of party finances for 1979 and 1980; general policy resolution.

In accordance with Articles 17 and 24 of its internal regulations, the Central Committee proceeded in that meeting to elect the Central Disciplinary Committee for 1982.

Finally, the Central Committee listened to messages from rank-and-file party members, expressing their satisfaction with President Chadli Bendjedid's speech on the state of the nation and their commitment to the goals outlined by the president of the republic and the decisions of the Central Committee.

The president of the republic delivered an important address in closing the meeting.

The assembly was adjourned at about 1 pm.

In the final proceedings of its sixth session, held at the Palace of Nations from 22 to 24 December 1981, the Central Committee of the FLN Party adopted a general policy resolution, the text of which reads as follows:

The Central Committee, having held its sixth regular session in the Palace of Nations on 22, 23 and 24 December on the eve of the year which will mark the 20th anniversary of national independence;

Having listened to the important guideline speech delivered by Brother Chadli Bendjedid, president of the republic and general secretary of the party, assessing actions undertaken and results obtained, both domestically and internationally;

Following the productive debates, characterized by a spirit of militancy and responsibility, of the items on the agenda;

Considering the profundity of the actions taken under the guidance of the party to implement the decisions and measures adopted by the Central Committee, through the broad and objective participation of the masses in the debates on issues of national importance, the reelection and broadening of local bodies of authority, the regional and national conferences held on matters affecting national life, and active preparation for the upcoming congresses of mass organizations;

Assessing the development of party and government structures in 1981, the Central Committee calls on all authorities to persevere in their efforts to achieve much more substantial results in order to concretely express the slogan of the special congress of the FLN Party: "For a Better Life." Since this slogan must be put into practice through precise management, thorough organization and control of the means of production and achievement, implementation of the decentralization policy, better coordination at all levels and rational use of human and material resources, in accordance with the guidelines of the party's general secretary, as set forth in Directive No 16;

Regarding the items on the agenda of the sixth session, the Central Committee expresses its satisfaction with the debates held on the role of the private sector, whose due place in the national economy is granted by the National Constitution, particularly concerning its contribution to mobilizing new resources for the benefit of economic development in various sectors.

In this regard, the Central Committee is very pleased with the spirit of democracy and responsibility which prevailed at all levels in the debates on the nonexploitive private sector.

Prepare for Election of Representative Assembly

Considering the important character of the upcoming congresses of mass organizations and the decisive impact of such organizations on the accomplishment of major social, political, economic and cultural tasks and on the success of building socialism;

The Central Committee recommends that party organs, at all levels, continue and intensify their efforts to prepare for the congresses of mass organizations and provide the best conditions capable of assuring the success of those congresses, imbuing them with a new dimension in keeping with the decisions of the FLN Party, particularly those decisions adopted by the special congress. This new dimension, dictated by the new stage of development, should be evidenced by real mobilization of all dynamic forces to achieve the goals of the Socialist Revolution.

As the National Popular Assembly elections draw near, the Central Committee is very pleased with the experiment of Popular Assemblies. This experiment, adopted by Algeria and which has proved effective thanks to broad public participation, nevertheless requires a more judicious choice of candidates so that the latter can raise the level of those assemblies and accomplish the noble and important tasks assigned to them.

With regard to the current election process in worker assemblies, a process which must be carried out strictly and whose field of application must be broadened, the Central Committee calls on all workers to double their efforts to implement the 5-year development plan and to win the battle of production and productivity. This will make it possible to translate into action the Socialist Management of Businesses, which represents a fundamental achievement and a school of responsible democracy.

The Central Committee hails the efforts made by the Algerian delegation at the Cancun Summit to accelerate the renewal of global economic negotiations between the North and South within the framework of the United Nations.

In this regard, the Central Committee expresses Algeria's concern over the obstacles impeding the renewal of those negotiations.

Among the measures aimed at establishing a new international economic order, the Central Committee also reaffirms the importance of strengthening relations between Third World countries.

Having been informed of the efforts made by Algeria to strengthen cooperation with Third World countries, the Central Committee expresses its satisfaction with the results obtained in this area.

The Central Committee reaffirms Algeria's unswerving determination to resolutely continue its efforts to contribute to the development of the policy of cooperation, solidarity and good neighborliness.

In expressing its satisfaction with the operation to delimit Algeria's borders with neighboring countries, the Central Committee is convinced that past and future work in this respect will open new prospects for the existing fraternal relations between our peoples.

Support for Saharan People

Whereas the protection of peace is dependent on the freedom and independence of peoples, the Central Committee cites the inalienable right of the Saharan people to self-determination and independence and supports the OAU and UN resolutions on this issue. The Central Committee also expresses its deep concern over the new attempts being made in the region to internationalize the conflict.

The Central Committee reiterates its appeal to the respective parties involved to help to implement the resolutions adopted by the OAU Implementing Committee and by the United Nations, which have recognized the Saharan people's right to self-determination and independence. On this basis, the Central Committee expresses its wish that the parties in conflict--Morocco and the POLISARIO Front--quickly open negotiations in keeping with OAU and UN resolutions to end a fratricidal war.

After analyzing the situation prevailing in the Arab world, the Central Committee notes that the development of current events constitutes a dangerous threat to the security and independence of Arab peoples.

The Central Committee believes that this situation is a result of the policy of aggression being carried out by the Zionist entity against Arab peoples and supported

by imperialism, which has constantly and totally disregarded the resolutions of the international community.

The Central Committee reaffirms that peace cannot be established in the Middle East without the restoration of the Palestinian people's national and legitimate rights. It reaffirms that any plan which does not consider the PLO as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people is doomed to failure.

Meet Challenges of Imperialism and Zionism

The Central Committee strongly denounces the annexation of the Golan Heights by the Zionist regime and reaffirms its full and total solidarity with its brother people of Syria, who are coping with this new plot hatched by imperialism and its allies.

The Central Committee calls for mobilization of the immense potential of the Arab nation to meet the challenges and expansionist aims of the Zionist entity, which is also threatening to annex southern Lebanon.

The Central Committee hails the Lebanese National Movement's struggle to protect the independence of Lebanon, its territorial integrity, the unity of its people and to thwart imperialist plans.

The Central Committee reaffirms Algeria's total solidarity with the brother people of Libya, who are confronting flagrant threats to the stability and security of their country.

The Central Committee expresses its concern over the continuing war between two brother countries, Iraq and Iran, a war that is sapping Arab and Islamic revolutionary energies. It expresses its hope that wisdom and the spirit of a shared destiny will prevail so that this war, which is only adding to the troubles of the Arab and Islamic nation, can be ended.

High Council of Youth

In reviewing issues of national importance, the Central Committee places special importance on youth, who represent a source of creative energy if they are prepared to rise to the level of their incumbent responsibilities of assuring the continuity of the Revolution and preserving the achievements gained at the cost of heavy sacrifices by all sincere militants.

Thus the Central Committee calls on the committee assigned to deal with the matter of youth to work to establish foundations in keeping with the requirements of the country's new stage of development. In this regard, the Central Committee also recommends establishing a high council of youth, assigned to monitor the implementation of a consistent, planned policy capable of assuring the mobilization and training of youth in accordance with the decisions of the FLN Party.

Considering the recorded results of the joint meeting of central authorities and coordinating boards of governorates to evaluate the operations of political and executive organs,

The Central Committee reaffirms its support of this efficient method of operation and calls on all authorities involved to make greater mobilization and coordination efforts for better use of human and material resources to implement the 5-year development plan and to improve our economic, social and cultural structures by eliminating parasitic elements, in order to assure our operations of a climate of tranquility and love of country to achieve the high interests of the people and the country.

The Central Committee affirms that the success of major tasks is necessarily dependent on commitment, discipline and respect for principles and laws in all areas and at all levels.

In this context, the Central Committee praises the results achieved by the Central Disciplinary Committee and approved by the Central Committee.

Concerning the national character and whereas history reflects the memory of peoples, the Central Committee hails the initiative of holding a national conference on writing the history of our Revolution, a unique step intended to bind present and future generations to their heritage of militancy, which represents a source of inspiration in the continuation of revolutionary action.

Having heard the report of the High Council on the National Language, the Central Committee also notes the results achieved in the area of generalizing the use of the national language. It praises the efforts made in this regard and calls on all responsible party and government authorities to take appropriate steps, in accordance with the guidelines contained in the report and a methodical plan, so that the national language will become the practical instrument of expression and work in all areas of national activity.

Regarding national unity, the Central Committee proudly notes the honorable efforts made by the nation and the demonstrations of solidarity with the disaster victims of the Chlef region. In this regard, the committee is very pleased with the contribution made by all government structures, particularly the vanguard role assumed by our People's National Army, its constant contribution to all major national achievements, its increased vigilance and its constant concern for preserving national unity and the achievements of the Revolution.

For a New International Order

The Central Committee is very pleased with the important speech delivered by Brother Chadli Bendjedid, president of the republic and general secretary of the party, to the National Popular Assembly on the state of the nation. The committee expresses its support of the statements praising the efforts made during the past year and the emphasis on the necessity of learning the necessary lessons before beginning a new year on more solid foundations.

In reviewing the international situation, the Central Committee notes that it is characterized by a dangerous escalation of imperialist offensives in various parts of the world, an escalation which constitutes a threat to Third World peoples. The Central Committee maintains that only a policy of nonalignment, based on the independence of peoples, control of their own political, economic, social and cultural destiny, and democratic international relations, can enable the international community to establish peace and security in the world.

The Central Committee affirms Algeria's commitment to continue its efforts to establish cooperation based on the equality of peoples and common interests.

In this context, the Central Committee recommends strengthening existing cooperation between Algeria and socialist countries. It calls for greater efforts to broaden cooperation and solidarity between Third World countries.

Noting with satisfaction the positive results achieved by the party in its relations with different friendly and brother countries, the Central Committee reaffirms its concern for assuring the development of such relations and for supporting all just causes and all peoples fighting for their independence, freedom and sovereignty.

With regard to French-Algerian relations, the Central Committee notes with tranquility the new prevailing climate of relations between the two countries following the visit to Algeria by the French chief of state. The committee believes that the results of that visit will open new and productive prospects for cooperation between Algeria and France, will constitute a positive step toward strengthening friendship between the two nations, will help to establish cooperation between all countries bordering on the Mediterranean Sea and will turn the latter into a lake of peace, cooperation and friendship between nations.

The Central Committee expresses its full support for the peoples of Namibia and South Africa, who are fighting, under the leadership of SWAPO and the ANC, against the racist and colonialist regime of Pretoria. The committee denounces all dilatory measures aimed at delaying the decolonization of Namibia and the criminal and barbarous acts of aggression perpetrated by the racist regime in South Africa against the peoples of the front-line countries, particularly those directed against the People's Republic of Angola.

While denouncing the attempt to destabilize the Republic of the Seychelles, the Central Committee reaffirms its firm support for the people, government and party of the Seychelles and strongly denounces the close cooperation which exists between the mercenaries and the racist regime of South Africa.

The Central Committee supports the OAU's continuing efforts to end colonialism in Africa and to achieve the independence of its peoples.

The Central Committee expresses its solidarity with the people of Chad in their efforts to protect their country's unity and to reinforce political and economic stability.

Noting the positive results achieved during the first 2 years of implementing the 5-year plan, the Central Committee calls on all dynamic forces of the nation to continue their efforts to implement the plan in accordance with the guidelines of our brother president of the republic and general secretary of the party, as stated in Directive No 16, and with the guidelines expressed during the annual assembly of central and local authorities.

The Central Committee calls on all political and executive organs to give special attention to preparing for the 20th anniversary of national independence in order to glorify the martyrs of our great Revolution.

The Central Committee expresses its satisfaction with the climate of militant candor and spirit of responsibility which prevailed all during this session. It also expresses its satisfaction with the session's positive results and the decisions which crowned its proceedings. The committee reaffirms its full support of Brother Chadli Bendjedid, president of the republic and general secretary of the party, in his efforts to achieve the aspirations of the masses and to protect the achievements of the Socialist Revolution.

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CSO: 4519/86

ALGERIA-NIGER BORDER DEMARCATION DESCRIBED

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 14 Dec 81 p 3

[Article by Rachid Semmad]

[Text] Dec 81--Boufarik Base. On a frosty morning, with a thick fog enveloping the slopes of the Tell Atlas mountains as a backdrop, the military plane scheduled to transport the team of journalists assigned to cover the Algerian-Nigerien border demarcation was on the runway with its engines running, set to take off in a few moments.

It was an easy flight and from the plane's portholes we looked down curiously at the squares representing the Mitidja, which was being invaded by the advancing concrete. Conversations in the plane were well underway, for the journey would be a bit long.

After a 4-hour flight, the plane began its descent, having flown over the unreal terrain of the south of the country. We caught sight of the Tamanrasset airport, which was marked by a constant coming and going of trucks and bulldozers.

Operations for laying out a new runway were actually in full swing. The plane landed without incident. The mission's leaders welcomed the group members before directing them to their lodgings.

Two crews took us to the border post of In-Guezzem the next day. In the helicopter, the deafening noise of the engines forced the pilot to shout so that we could hear his explanations.

At a speed of 240 km per hour and an altitude of 400 meters, the aircraft flew over the majestic ochre-colored Ahaggar mountains, overlapping with spellbinding sand dunes. The helicopter dropped down and landed, not without raising some clouds of sand.

On Friday morning, the demarcation crews rose very early to set up the equipment to be taken to In-Azzaoua. This latter point, located 270 km south of In-Guezzem, is the site of the ninth boundary marker.

It took nearly 10 hours for the large convoy, containing all essential personnel and equipment, to reach In-Azzaoua and the demarcation line established by the former occupant.

Led by a guide, a native of the area who knew the terrain with his eyes closed, the convoy moved out when the first rays of sunshine appeared.

The first stretch, about 30 km of nothing but sand, was rough going; vehicles bogging down in the sea of sand were forced to use a winch to pull out.

The scenery was impressive. We crossed black mountains and the sand, despite the "cheich" wrapped around our faces, penetrated the openings of the Land Rovers.

From time to time, the convoy stopped to wait for those lagging behind, whose trucks had become bogged down in the sand.

The drivers used the opportunity to check the engines, while we noticed dried marshes in the middle of this lunar landscape.

On the Anou-In-Attei plateau, another truck ran into problems; its position was immediately radioed to the convoy leader.

Seated in the back of the Land Rover, the jolts irritated us as the vehicle bounced over mounds of sand.

The driver swerved to avoid sand dunes. We began to feel fatigued when the sun reached its zenith.

Our thirst was quenched by the convoy's water supply.

We crossed the unforgivable desert with difficulty, fascinated by the mirages that caught our eye.

At 1804 near the well of In-Azzoua, a "Magirus" became deeply bogged in the sand. The driver, a man from Timimoun, attached the winch just when the sun was starting to set.

Several attempts were required for the powerful vehicle to finally get free.

The final kilometers were swallowed up quickly and the vehicles' lights gleamed far into the night.

Our calvary finally ended at 1951. It was time to park the vehicles and give orders; the convoy leader directed us to the company of In-Azzoua border guards. We spent the night there before visiting that corner of the desert the next day, surrounded by sand as far as the eye could see.

We returned to the base to find the demarcation equipment being transferred to helicopters.

An MIL-6 cargo helicopter whirled around and flew off into the blue, taking with it cartographic equipment and technicians. We took our places on board the aircraft.

A Fokher-type plane followed us. For those who are uninformed, this aircraft had an important role to play; it positioned the technicians at selected points all along the border.

The journey went off without a hitch and the helicopter set down on a makeshift airstrip.

The equipment was unloaded from the belly of the large craft before it took off again for the In-Azzaoua base.

All human and material resources have been deployed by the Algerian Government to make the demarcation of the Algerian-Nigerien border a tangible example of African solidarity and good neighborliness between two sovereign countries.

For example, it should be pointed out that the border with Niger is 950 km long and is composed of three straight segments.

An official of the National Institute of Cartography detailed the different stages of the operation for us.

"The mixed demarcation commission, created last year after several meetings and field surveys, decided to begin operations.

"The demarcation process has gone through three distinct stages. The first stage implemented the results of the field surveys, establishing bases near the border.

"Thus it was necessary to use the maps left behind by the colonists.

"Based on this data, we delimited the border, which runs 3 km north of the In-Azzaoua well.

"The border consists of three straight segments with four distinctive points: the western point with Mali, those of In-Guezzem and In-Azzaoua (Niger), and the final point with Libya."

The second stage of the operation, which began on 17 October 1981, mainly involved analyzing the data in Algiers to determine the coordinates of the established points.

That is when the work of air force crews began.

The Fokher aircraft, equipped with an inertial navigation system, guided and positioned Algerian and Nigerien cartographic technicians.

Signals transmitted by satellite were stored as they were received on magnetic cassettes before being computer-processed in Algiers.

From a purely technical standpoint, satellite positions, Doppler tracking and the time were carefully processed, since the accuracy of the points could vary from 50 cm to 5 m, depending on the computer programs and type of observation used.

As may be noted, the latest technology was employed in this operation, the only one of its kind on the African continent.

At the In-Azzaoua well, where the third stage is taking place, the placement of boundary markers is underway; crews of technicians, with their sophisticated equipment, are measuring angles and distances using theodolites and laser distance-measuring instruments.

In the vicinity of the well, the only one between In-Guezzem and Tamanrasset, the demarcation line laid out by the occupation forces is represented by a permanent boundary marker on which the following distances are inscribed: Djanet, 615 km; Tamanrasset, 315 km; In-Guezzem, 290 km; and Ifrouane (Niger), 285 km.

Here we are on Nigerien soil, as symbolized by a metal plaque reading "Republic of Niger." In accordance with the new survey, this plaque will be moved 3 km north of the well.

At the site, we took advantage of the opportunity to find out the impressions of the official in charge of the Nigerien delegation.

While supervising the work of technicians and after emphasizing that no one had ever seen a demarcation problem settled in such record time, the delegation leader then explained the political significance of the event.

"The historic nature of this operation will make it possible to strengthen the ties of friendship and brotherhood which have always existed, consequently abolishing what was done by the colonist. This responsible act of two neighboring countries is evidence of our leaders' good intentions."

Concerning the cooperation of technical crews, the Nigerien official said that it was very positive, from both a material and a technical standpoint.

He pointed out again that the Algerian Government had made available considerable resources to assure the success of the demarcation project.

"The final stage of the operation is underway and is characterized by the placement of boundary markers; matters are clear and there is no longer any ambiguity. I want to take this opportunity to hail the Algerian people with the greatest admiration, for they have always distinguished themselves by maintaining friendly and fraternal relations with our people."

In conclusion, he recalled that the results of the Algerian-Nigerien border demarcation will enable future generations of both countries to have the best relations of friendship and brotherhood.

The third stage of the project, which began on 26 November, made possible the official installation of 9 of the 12 boundary markers constituting the line of demarcation.

The builders of the Algerian-Nigerian border, working under harsh conditions 2,600 km from the capital and on uneven terrain in some locations, are imposing their implacable law on this rough land.

The preparations for setting up the demarcation equipment were not so simple, since the 4-wheel-drive vehicles of the ANP [People's National Army] had to shuttle back and forth several times to transport building materials to the points established by cartographers.

The ninth boundary marker, set 1 m down in the ground and 3 m above in the form of a tube, was painted white with simple inscriptions: Algerian Side of Algerian-Nigerien Border and Nigerien Side of Nigerien-Algerian Border.

According to the established schedule, the rest of the work, i.e., the installation of the last three boundary markers, will be completed before the end of this month.

With regard to the Algerian delegation, the Chikhi commander summarized for us the undeniable contribution of support operations carried out by air force crews.

"Considering the terrain conditions, characterized by wind and sand, which considerably hamper the movement of equipment, the navigational personnel, mechanics and technicians have carried out their mission unselfishly and seriously, confronting an unpredictable enemy, the immense desert and poor visibility.

"The demarcation of the border between two neighboring countries will be evidence for future generations of a means of stabilizing and strengthening bilateral relations."

The demarcation of the Algerian-Nigerien border goes on day after day, thanks to the dedication of ANP technicians, cartographers, officers and djounoud /soldiers/.

This work has already been crowned with success. It represents the most striking example of the spirit of good neighborliness and brotherhood, as well as of cooperation, mutual assistance and active solidarity between Algeria and Niger.

It is also concrete proof of both countries' devotion to the OAU principle of the inviolability of borders inherited with independence.

The final stage of the operation will be devoted to drafting and composing the Algerian-Nigerien border treaty, which will be submitted to the chiefs of state of both countries before its scheduled signing in the first quarter of next year.

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BUDGET PROPOSALS OUTLINED

Algiers EL MOUDJAHID in French 15 Dec 81 pp 1, 3

[Article by R. Semmad and K. Yessad]

[Text] With Mr Rabah Bitat presiding, the National Popular Assembly yesterday continued its proceedings on the submission of operating budgets for the Ministries of Agriculture, Commerce and Hydraulics and the State Secretariats for Forests and Land Development and Foreign Trade.

This session, which was attended by Messrs M'hamed Yala, Abdelaziz Khellaf, Brahim Brahimi and Mohamed Rouighi, representing their respective ministries, was an opportunity for all assembly members to make a complete evaluation of these strategic sectors, which are having to cope with a good number of outside obstacles to their proper operation.

The chairman of the Economic and Social Committee gave a detailed account of the respective sectors' operating budgets.

The proposed 1982 budget of the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Revolution, totaling approximately 676.362 million dinars, showed an absolute increase of 69.728 million dinars and a relative increase of 11.08 percent. These funds are distributed as follows:

For 1982, allocations for personnel expenses amounted to 61.378 million dinars, to be used for administrative needs and for training engineers and technicians. These funds will be used to train skilled personnel temporarily assigned to the National Service and scheduled for release this year and during the following year: 380 engineers and 800 technicians this year and 483 engineers and 600 technicians during the following year.

The second aspect of this important category concerns the training services of structures, 50 percent of which has been taken over by the national budget.

In the case of the 1,058 engineers and technicians, 513 of whom are employed in production plants and offices, special funds have been earmarked to pay the expense of their assignment to agricultural operations which are in the process of being reorganized.

In view of the importance of this vital sector of the national economy and the need to make available to producers the resources which are essential for providing

agriculture with a new impetus, provisions have been made for a large purchase of equipment and materials in 1982, including 4,594 tractors, 567 combines, 435 trucks, 505 utility vehicles, 8,000 farm implements and 5,000 tedders, balers, pickups and connectors.

Regarding the reorganization of agricultural operations, the committee requested that it be supported by a program of action under the leadership of collective farms in order to delegate responsibility to them and raise their political awareness of the role which they must play in agricultural management and their duty to the national community. Regulation of the sale of fruits and vegetables was stressed, since the report noted that the efforts made in this area have resulted in better availability of produce and an improved distribution system. Price control was emphasized in the document, which stressed that such control should be strict so that retailers' prices and profit margins would be observed.

Concerning the sale of meat, particularly imported meat, which is undergoing a crisis characterized by ever greater demand in comparison to the supply, better control of the prices of national production was recommended, since they are not within the reach of those with modest incomes.

The operating budget of the State Secretariat for Forests and Land Development was discussed next. Proposed allocations for next year amount to 214.263 million DA [Algerian Dinars], an increase of 7.730 million DA over the 1981 budget. The report stated that the increase concerned the improvement of workers' social conditions and additional funds for training 500 skilled technicians, an adjustment of allowances for dependents and operating subsidies granted to various organizations dependent on this sector.

Certain reductions of funds for some infrastructures and operating capital should be noted.

Almost all of the increase in this department's budget is earmarked for upgrading personnel and, in particular, for improving the status of forest rangers.

During 1982, among other years, funds of 100 million dinars were allocated to pay for a program authorization of 28 million dinars, intended mainly for reforestation.

Thus the campaign against erosion and desertification should be considered of the utmost importance in view of the reduction of usable farming area. In keeping with this same line of thinking, the report stressed the goals assigned to this sector by the 5-Year Plan, aimed at restoring and protecting national forests.

The implementation of a program of action is essential to the policy of providing park areas in urban population centers.

The proposed allocations for the budget of the Ministry of Hydraulics come to 329.490 million DA, or an increase of 20.493 million DA, distributed as follows: Personnel Expenses (+12.413 million DA), Maintenance Operations (+6.000 million DA), Operating Subsidies (+6.000 million DA) and Public Participation (+1.000 million DA). Allocations for equipment and services were reduced by approximately 4.920 million DA. Several remarks and recommendations concerning this budget were reported to the participants.

It was noted that there was a substantial increase in proposed allocations for personnel expenses of governorate administrations, earmarked mainly for salaries and reclassification.

This increase should result in an improvement in their operation and consequently in faster implementation of programs.

It should also enable them to step up their assistance to communes, to help them overcome the problems which they face daily.

The increase in the number of trainees at the Institute of Hydrometry and Improvement and in training centers should be noted. It is hoped that communities will partly benefit from the results of such training.

In view of the gradual implementation of the "High Plateaus" Program, which is dependent on the existence of sufficient amounts of potable water, existing structures in the regions involved must be reinforced.

The water supply conditions of urban areas in particular have often been discussed by assembly members. It appears that despite the efforts made, this vital need is still inadequately satisfied, especially in summer.

This situation has led to deplorable hygienic conditions. An increase in allocations for maintenance works for dams and irrigation systems was noted.

Due to considerable losses of water for irrigation and nutritional purposes, which has been noted as a result of dams silting up, dredging and slope protection operations must be stepped up and constantly improved.

Conservation of irrigated lands deserves special attention and requires extensive drainage works to prevent the buildup of salt and the consequent loss of usable farming areas.

Relieved of the duty of collecting water taxes and providing realiable resources, the departments assigned to maintain irrigation systems should be able to operate more efficiently and to repair the damage which such systems have suffered.

The proposed 1982 operating budget of the Ministry of Commerce totals 61.813 million DA, having been increased by 6.756 million dinars. In the case of personnel expenses, the increase is approximately 1.534 DA, justified by the increased staff recruitment of 25 administrators, 25 principal inspectors, 5 inspectors and 50 day laborers.

In the case of outside services, the proposed increase is 4.140 million DA, also resulting from a staff increase which includes, among others, 20 principal inspectors, 30 inspectors and 20 auditors. Allocations for equipment and operation were raised by more than 620,000 DA, intended to cover the expense of intergovernorate transfers of inspection teams established as a result of the new price control policy and the travel expenses of the staff members to be hired.

Allocations for training alone were increased by more than 553,000 dinars, granted to training establishments under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce, such

as the Institute of Trade Technology (ITC) and the Institute of Refrigeration Technology (ITF). Funds earmarked for maintenance works were reduced by less than 150,000 DA. Concerning remarks and recommendations, the committee was pleased with the improvement recorded in 1981 for citizens' services as a result of the anti-poverty program and the establishment of new working-class markets and the opening of Algerian Galleries outlets.

It is certain that the increase in such structures will eventually make it possible to normalize the situation and to assure effective protection of citizens' purchasing power. In view of this, the effort made must be supplemented by their priority establishment in urban areas located in underprivileged regions and the High Plateaus. Marketing structures in the capital and major urban centers must also be further improved.

The supply conditions of small merchants operating in small towns and rural areas must be improved so that they do not have to resort to "new wholesalers" to obtain goods at higher prices.

The committee reiterated its recommendations concerning: the need for greater strictness in fixing prices, their official authorization and their observation by all business operators; the elimination of certain illegal practices such as concomitant sales, prior payments by signed blank check, advances on often hypothetical purchases, etc.; observation of production standards (weight, quantity, quality).

As part of the effort toward better intersectoral integration, an important goal of the 5-Year Plan, the committee requested the establishment of an information system enabling business operators and all citizens to know the nature and features of national production. Such information would also indicate the location of production and marketing plants, their capacity and their development prospects.

The committee pointed out the fact that many citizens are engaged in often parasitic and very lucrative commercial operations (purchase of standing crops) without meeting any legal obligations (Commercial Register) and generally without paying any tax.

The State Secretariat for Foreign Trade will have a 1982 operating budget of approximately 18.298 million DA, or an increase of 976,200 DA. The budget showed an increase in allocations for personnel expenses and operating subsidies, as well as a reduction in funds for equipment and maintenance works and services.

The committee noted with satisfaction the impact of the programs implemented by the State Secretariat for Foreign Trade, which have made possible greater availability of imported products, thus substantially improving the coverage of needs.

These programs could be developed through better adaptation of AGI [expansion unknown] to the priority needs of the country and their timely satisfaction in order to prevent shortages.

A serious effort should also be made to promote national products abroad, especially in Third World countries. It is actually essential for our operators, even in the event that the volume of our exports remains low in the present stage of development, to begin finding their niche in international markets. Such experience is an indispensable investment for developing our exports.

Ministers' Speeches

Mr M'hamed Yala spoke in the absence of the minister of agriculture and agrarian revolution, recalling that the recommendations of the Fourth Special FLN Congress are being implemented in the field. The minister referred to the constant improvement noted, resulting in a significant number of farms benefiting from it in the preceding agricultural season.

Regarding the reorganization of agricultural operations, the speaker noted the positive features of the operation. In the area of training, 4,500 accountants and assistant accountants will be trained and placed in the field with agronomists. In this regard, the minister mentioned the contribution of skilled agricultural personnel presently working in nonagricultural sectors, a contribution that will be beneficial to this sensitive sector.

Concerning grain production, he pointed out the aid (52 billion centimes) granted by the government in addition to supplementary funds for the present season.

Since man is the common denominator of any improvement in production and productivity, after announcing the retirement of 28 percent of all personnel, the minister talked about the improvement in the situation of farmworkers receiving the interoccupational guaranteed minimum wage.

With regard to the traditional sector, the minister stressed the need to grant it the necessary funds and technical support to make possible its active contribution to agricultural development.

The state secretary for forests and land development then outlined the principal features of the measures approved by the Council of Ministers in its meeting of 13 December to deal with the drought that is affecting certain regions. Concerning fodder and other products, Mr Rouighi said that the government has done everything possible to assure a secure supply. Concerning the vaccination of livestock, 7 million animals will be affected by this measure, which will mobilize 84 skilled teams.

Regarding the protection of national forests, the secretary spoke of the serious fires in October, which represent 65 percent of the fires recorded this year. To deal with any eventuality, Mr Rouighi announced the completion of 5,000 km of the planned 45,000 km of fire breaks and then reiterated that the legislation (laws on forests, hunting, etc.) to be submitted to the government and to the National Popular Assembly is in preparation.

In response to the questions of assembly members, the minister of hydraulics in turn said that the country's highest authorities are concerned about the sector, giving priority to providing sufficient drinking water to the population throughout national territory. The minister also stressed the need to increase the number of personnel receiving training and to reinforce existing structures. He also emphasized the determination of everyone to preserve irrigation infrastructures. To prevent this precious resource from being wasted, as the minister pointed out, it is urgent to delegate responsibility to all organizations concerned in order to achieve better coordination.

The minister of commerce then assured the assembly that emergency measures would soon be approved for providing satisfactory solutions to all problems facing the business sector in general and to small merchants, who are and remain the allies of the Revolution. The minister also mentioned the problems inherent in quality control. Such control will henceforth be applied to all products marketed domestically. Concerning the project for the construction of 1,000 bakeries, the minister confirmed that it is still in progress and will be implemented. It is just a matter of time.

Finally, the minister said that all problems concerning the marketing and availability of staple commodities will be permanently resolved throughout the country and particularly in the most underprivileged governorates.

Agriculture and Agrarian Revolution

Increase in absolute value of budget by 69.728 million DA. For 1982, the acquisition of 4,594 tractors, 567 combines, 435 trucks, 505 utility vehicles, 8,000 farm implements. Retirement of 28 percent of all personnel.

Forests

Budget increase of 7.730 million DA for improving workers' social conditions, training 500 skilled technicians and adjustment of allowances for dependents. Twenty-eight million DA earmarked for reforestation.

Hydraulics

Budget increase of 20.493 million DA for personnel expenses, maintenance works, public programs and increased assistance to communes. Priority for population's supply of drinking water.

Commerce

Budget increase of 6.756 million dinars. Increased allocations for training. National Popular Assembly members recommend greater strictness in setting prices, their official authorization and their observation by all business operators; elimination of certain illegal practices; observation of production standards.

Foreign Trade

Budget increase of 976,200 DA. Quality control for all domestically marketed products.

Assembly members are very pleased with the greater availability of imported products.

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ARAB SOLIDARITY WITH BAHRAIN DEMANDED

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic No 1313, 1 Jan 82 p 6

[Article by Sulayman al-Furzuli: "The Security of the Arab World in... Bahrain!"]

[Text] The conspiracy which was uncovered in Bahrain is not something ephemeral, even though it was something which was expected. Its consequences will continue to be felt as long as the Arabs in general do not take a united position with regard to the Iranian situation. So far the Arabs in general have not taken any sort of united position with regard to any issue, as we saw from the results of the summit meeting at Fez and the summit meeting at Amman before that. And the Bahrain problem also demonstrates this. The irony in this matter is that Arab solidarity, which is supposed to be the rule and a basic principle, as well as being the basis for the idea of the Arab League, has become more like the exception rather than the rule. It is as if differences of opinion are the rule and solidarity is the exception!

There is a particular sensitivity to the Bahrain issue which the Arabs of the Gulf are aware of and which is no secret to the other Arabs. King Husayn told AL-HAWADITH last year that he personally had taken up this matter with the Shah of Iran before Bahrain proclaimed its independence. Iran's choice of Bahrain [as a target] has nothing to do with the Islamic revolution. It comes more under the heading of Iranian ambitions and greed. Concerning this issue the present regime in Iran is no different from the regime before it.

If the intention was merely to cause unrest in the Gulf area, then any other target [other than Bahrain] could have been chosen or more than one target could have been chosen. However, the decision to concentrate on Bahrain means that Bahrain in particular was the target. This is something which means that the matter is not merely an internal affair, but is also a matter which belongs in a pan-Arab framework. The reason for this is that in any type of dispute between any Arab nation and a [non-Arab] foreign nation, normal criteria or personal frames of mind are different with regard to rulers and regimes. One criterion becomes all-important, and it is that of the security of the entire Arab world—including all of its nations and rulers, no matter which of them are in the right and which of them are in the wrong. Regimes and rulers have to settle accounts between themselves and the peoples which they rule, but when it is a matter of [protecting] the Arab countries, then all of the Arabs must settle accounts with all of the Arabs' enemies or those who are seeking and conspiring to grab Arab territory and are thus threatening the fate of all the Arabs. This is something which the Palestinian question proves to us every day.

Bahrain is a small nation which is unable to defend itself alone. It could also be that all of the Arabs together would be unable to defend it if the scales are tipped and greedy people are provided with a favorable opportunity, as happened in the case of Palestine and the Palestinians. For this reason it is necessary to constantly shed new light on the situation in the entire Arab world. It is an axiom that an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. In the case of the Palestine question, and after it the Lebanese question, attempts have been made to administer cures amounting to several pounds, but the cures have remained ineffective. As a result, the ineffective cure has become a problem which could be more difficult than the original cause of the problem which called for the cure, especially since it has brought the condition of the Arab world in general to a state where it appears that no prevention or cure will do any good!

The fact is that the Arab nations' relations and methods of dealing both with each other and with others, whether in a spirit of controversy or friendship, have come to be a disgrace in the eyes of the world. This constitutes a danger not only to those who are bringing about this disgrace, but also to the entire Arab nation--including all those who are guilty and all those who are innocent. Unfortunately the security of the Arab world is the first thing which is impaired when these types of mutual relations exist!

The Bahrain issue, above all, concerns the security of the Arab world. It is not something which concerns only "Isa ibn Khalifah, and it is not "Isa ibn Khalifah who is pointing his sword at Iran. Iran is the one who is pointing its sword at Bahrain, and it has done so before. This, in itself, is a fact which refutes any slander [against the Arabs concerning this issue] since one could have his doubts concerning the matter if some other Gulf country were involved. The solution to this matter is to be found not only in showing solidarity with Bahrain, even if this solidarity were expressed by more than words and became something more serious. The solution to the problem is also to be found in taking seriously the security of the Arab world generally, along with all its concomitant circumstances and requirements, and taking action on this basis. The security of the Arab world is a joint responsibility. We cannot have certain actions done for the sake of this security on the one hand, and then have the opposite done elsewhere, even if priorities differ. Solidarity with Bahrain is above all the duty of those who have had their own lands usurped. The reason for this is that this solidarity with Bahrain will bring them closer to regaining their usurped lands, whereas pursuing the opposite course, no matter what the pretext might be, will cause them to be even farther away from this goal!

But it appears that we are all drifting farther away [from this goal]!

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CSO: 4404/220

NEW STUDENT FEDERATION ELECTIONS PRODUCE MODERATE LEADERS

Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 8 Dec 81 p 8

[Article by 'Ali Mahir and Na'imah Khalil: "New Faces in the Student Federation Elections: Their Hopes -- To Work on Behalf of the Student Community"]

[Text] New male and female student faces have appeared in the student federation elections this year. Election campaigns have been heated in some faculties and calm in others. Student activity committee secretaries have been elected in every faculty, in addition to the faculty federation secretaries.

Today AL-AKHBAR is presenting the new figures who won election victories, their hopes for this stage, and what they want from the student federations that are working on behalf of the student community, filling the students' vacuum in a manner that will make benefit of culture, the arts, science and religious values that are far removed from extremism, along with a sound university student society, serious use of expertise of the professors and leaders, and an opening up toward university society.

Positive aspects were embodied in the atmosphere of affection that pervaded the student candidates and negative ones were embodied in the lack of sufficient enthusiasm on the part of some students to cast votes. At 'Ayn Shams University a meeting took place with the winning students; there, Dr Nasr al-Sayyud Nasr, vice president of the university for student affairs, the deans of the faculties, faculty members, Zakariya al-'Arif, general supervisor of youth care in the university, and the youth care supervisors of the faculties supervised the holding of the elections.

Winning the positions of federation secretaries in the faculties were Salah-al-Din Kashif Muhammad (Faculty of Letters); Muhsin 'Ali Mahmud Tu'aymah (Faculty of Law); Husam-al-Din Muhammad Mitwalli (Faculty of Commerce), Tharwa't Muhammad Ibrahim (Faculty of Science); Tal'at 'Abd-al-Rahman 'Abd-al-Mun'im (Faculty of Medicine); Muhyi-al-Din Fu'ad Muhammad (Faculty of Engineering); Ahmad al-Matarawi Ahmad (Faculty of Agriculture); Mahir 'Agd-al-Hamid Mitwalli (Faculty of Education); Hanan Mahmud al-Minyawi (Girls' Faculty); and Samir Zaki al-Bandari (Faculty of Languages).

The meeting started with the student 'Isam-al-Din al-Tawanisi, member of the Faculty of Commerce Cultural Committee and a model student in the faculty for 2 years, who is entering the federation for the first time. He said that cultural activity in the faculty needs an impetus so that a greater number of scientific and cultural symposia may be held, that it was necessary that a greater number of students take part in the federation's activities, that the activities not just be confined to the

families, and that this activity should be further extended. Student activity does not get in the way of studies, in his opinion, because he obtains a rating of "good" every year; one of its most important distinguishing characteristics is that it brings out and polishes the students' talents. 'Isam also has singing as a hobby and is an elected member of the university chorus.

The Al-Nasr Family

Ahmad 'Isam, an older brother in the al-Nasr family, considers that the federation's activities arise from the families. Therefore it is necessary to give family budgets sufficient support through the federation's resources. Agreeing with this opinion is the girl student Jihan Ahmad Salim, member of the faculty's family committee. She says that the federation must have tangible activities this year and recommends that attention be given to artistic and musical aspects in the faculty by inviting visual artists to express their opinions on means for coordinating attention to artistic activities in the faculty.

Inas Nazmi, an older sister in the faculty's Egyptian family and member of the family committee as well, has been engaged in student activity since the secondary school level, when she was the chairwoman of the al-'Abhasiyah Girls' School federation. Inas says that attention must be devoted to cultural activity and to attracting students to the faculty's special office. Hisham Halawah, secretary of the faculty's social committee, claims that it is necessary to underwrite and increase loans for the financially disadvantaged and that the federation must play a role in solving students' problems.

In the Faculty of Law, Muhsin Tu'aymah, the secretary of the faculty federation this year and previous years, says that it is essential to restore spirit to university students so that they can have a sense of their own identity, and to dispel the phenomenon of fear about the future by opening the doors to jobs for faculty graduates. Marzuq Jalal Musa, secretary of the hiking committee in the faculty, says that it is necessary to devote attention to hiking activity and scouting because that gives students a feel for discipline, cooperation and group solidarity. In past years the Faculty of Law has won top place in scouting, and it must retain its status. Usamah Ahmad Ibrahim, secretary of the social and excursion committee, states that attention must be devoted to excursions that acquaint students with various features of their country before they graduate and they must include the maximum number of students. He is entering the federation for the first time. Jamal Ahmad al-Dab', secretary of the faculty's committee on families, considers that it is important to make students in the faculty conscious of their rights and duties by meeting with family rapporteurs and providing assistance to students and helping them through the family fund.

Coping with Religious Extremism

In the Faculty of Science, Jamal Muhammad Ramadan, fourth-year chemistry student, won the position of chairman of the cultural and artistic committee; he is entering the federation for the first time. He says that his goal is to hold scientific, cultural and religious symposia in order to cope with religious extremism and increase students' knowledge of our country and its history and culture. Majdi Mahmud Musa, fourth-year student in mathematics and secretary of the faculty's hiking committee, says that his most important goal is to bring the committee's activities to

students in general through incentives to support young people's activities and fill the void that exists around them; he is also concerned to make textbooks available.

Sami al-Jabali, third-year student in statistics and secretary of the faculty's family committee, says "We are preparing to celebrate Children's Day this year and are giving attention to scholarly excursions that will benefit faculty students." His colleague Sami al-Qadi, secretary of the social and hiking committee, agrees with him. In the Faculty of Medicine, Muhammad Sa'd Sulayman won the position of secretary of the committee on social activity; one of his goals is to reinforce social bonds among students and faculty members and devote attention to environmental development campaigns and to linking the university to society.

In the Faculty of Letters, Usamah Taha Salamah won membership in the artistic committee. He is taking part in the federation for the first time. His hobby is music and he says that students can pursue their hobbies in an organized manner through the federation. Another new face in the federation in the Faculty of Letters is Ra'id Mahmud Jum'ah, first-year student in psychology, who hopes that cultural services may be provided for his male and female colleagues so that they may develop their talents, and also that religious extremism may be dealt with through purposeful religious culture and historic scientific culture. Ashraf Salah-al-Din, another member of the cultural committee says that the federation can play a part in solving the students' problems within the faculty and facilitating their dealings with student affairs, as well as holding purposeful scientific and cultural symposia.

An Intimate Student Society

In the Faculty of Languages, Samir Zaki al-Bandari won the position of faculty federation secretary. Samir says that his goal is to develop an intimate student society by pursuing all activities and excelling at them; this is not a new idea to the faculty, which has won first place in university competitions. 'Imad Faruq, secretary of the faculty's cultural committee, says that the committee will publish a monthly poetry magazine containing work by people in the faculty, in addition to wall publications.

Among the girl students who won positions in the faculty federation is Amani al-Sayyid Faraj (third-year student in Italian), who previously took part in the federation last year, in the committee on families. Her objective is to provide resources for faculty families so that they may carry out fruitful activities. Aminah al-Qadi says that she hopes that the number of girl students taking part in artistic activities will increase so that they can demonstrate their cultural talents. Maha Wajih of the German Department won membership in the federation council for the hiking and public service committee: she says, "The faculty's hiking activity got me interested in taking part in this activity, because I am a first year student." Dr Muhammad 'Abd-al-'Aziz, leader of the hiking committee in the faculty, says that the hiking group conducts important public service training activities.

At Hilwan University

Elections were carried out at Hilwan University and resulted in the election of Amirah Ahmad Ma'mun al-Kashif, in the fourth group of the Faculty of Fine Arts, as member of the cultural and artistic committee and member of the acting group.

She says that the federation is the place where students can express their opinions and discuss and be aware of their problems. Through the federation, it is possible to underline the faculty's role in the course of various activities.

Amirah al-Kashif is trying to work to encourage the holding of exhibits and to develop students' talents through the federation and the issuance of literary magazines so that students can express their literary instincts.

The student Ahmad Salah-al-Din Nayil of the Faculty of Fine Arts was elected to the hiking committee.

Concerning the problems he would like to involve himself with, he says, "I would like to bring the students a knowledge and understanding of proper religion, devoid of deviations, and we should try to extend our services outside the scope of the faculty so that we can help uplift the country's status.

The student Ala'-al-Din Farid Fawzi, Faculty of Home Economics and member of the athletic committee, was a representative of the athletic committee in the al-Sa'-idiyah secondary school; and when he joined the faculty he started to engage in sporting activities. He is a goalie in the faculty soccer team and this is the first year in which he ran for office and won. As to his academic level, he is 10th in the faculty in the first year.

The student Iman 'Abd-al-Muhdi Mansur of the Faculty of Home Economics and member of the family committee says:

"Since my preparatory studies, I have been engaged in social work in the course of visits with female colleagues in the school to the asylums to help the needy and collect donations. When I enrolled in the faculty I ran as a candidate for the family committee and won all 4 years. Last year I set out a number of plans, including a visit to the children's village."

Model Hiker

The student Aminah Muhammad Ibrahim of the Faculty of Physical Education for Girls belongs to the hiking and public service committee:

At the primary level she joined the flower team and was active in swimming. In the preparatory level she ran for the camp for people who were exceptional in activities and won the secondary level championship in basketball and swimming. She was secretary of the technical committee in the Heliopolis secondary school for 3 academic years and has represented girl students on the hiking and public service committee over a 4-year period in the faculty. She has represented the faculty at the university festival as an elected person and has acquired the nickname of the model hiker.

The student Su'ad Fathi 'Abd-al-'Aziz, 20, of the Faculty of Physical Education for Girls, is a member of the family committee.

She considers that the federation is the place where girl students can exercise democracy and freedom of opinion by expressing the problems their female colleagues are suffering from and that in addition the federation tries to bring female students together.

A Day for Physical Education Graduates

'Azzah Mahir 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Bahi, 19, of the Faculty of Physical Education for Girls, is a member of the social and excursion committee.

She considers that it is appropriate to seek to create ways that will make it possible to solve students' problems; among the ideas that are going about in her mind now is one of setting a day aside for faculty graduates to celebrate and set up religious contests.

Khalid Muhammad Ahmad, 21, of the Faculty of Commerce and Business Administration in al-Zamalik, is a member of the social and excursion committee.

He did not go on excursions during his years in the primary, preparatory and secondary levels. He engaged in all athletic activities and was nominated to the social committee in the secondary group, and won. This is the first year he has been a candidate in the faculty, and his ratings have not been below "good."

He considers that the federation is the only place where students can engage in activities and that they cannot do that through the families.

He is intending to issue a magazine in the federation's name and extends an invitation to all faculties to take part in athletic, cultural and artistic activity.

He considers that the most important problem he can deal with is congestion in the lecture and working auditoriums.

Manal Muhammad Mustafa, 19, of the Faculty of Commerce and Business Administration in al-Zamalik, is on the cultural and artistic committee.

She aspires to go about organizing a symposium this year, to which she has invited Mr Mustafa Amin, and to take a cultural excursion to the canal towns.

She considers that the most important problem that can be dealt with through the federation is that of the prices of university textbooks and the effort to set prices at a token level for students.

Majdi al-Ghandur, 21, Faculty of Commerce and Business Administration in al-Zamalik, is a member of the faculty's social and excursion committee.

He considers that it is the federation's duty to issue a student guide to the faculty so that new students may be served by it.

Students at Al-Azhar University

At al-Azhar University, a meeting was held with a number of people who had won positions in the federation elections, including Mahmud 'Abd-al-Baqi, fourth year student in the accounting branch at the Faculty of Commerce at al-Azhar, secretary of the social and excursion committee and chairman of social leaders in the university. Last year he was elected vice chairman of social leaders and was chosen model student for the faculty. He has been exceptional in his studies during his academic years in the faculty. On the latest news of the social committee, the student Muhammad

'Abd-al-Baqi says that a meeting was held with the federation pilot, Dr Yahya Nasr, and the committee pilot, Dr Mahmud al-Jiddawi, at which agreement was reached on the purchase of books stipulated for the faculty students; the federation pays the price of the books and distributes them free of charge among students. He said that he has started organizing meal tickets for faculty students so that each student can acquire meals, and special cards have been made up for out-of-town students.

Muhammad Ibrahim al-Bultaji, fourth-year student in the Faculty of Commerce at al-Azhar, accounting branch, secretary of the family committee and member of the Welfare Family, which is piloted by Dr Sa'd 'Ashmawi, vice-chairman of the faculty of Commerce, says that his basic goal in the federation is to serve students and that the federation's task is to strengthen the bonds between students and faculty members.

He said that arrangements have been made to hold soccer matches among university faculty families in January in addition to arrangements for a graduates' excursion for fourth-year students, along with faculty members, to al-Fayyum.

The problem he is facing is that a large number of students do not take part in activities.

The student Muhammad Rashad Zaytun, fourth-year student in the accounting branch and secretary of the artistic committee in al-Azhar's Faculty of Commerce, says that he traveled to Paris to work during his summer vacation last year and was elected assistant secretary of the higher artistic committee of the university in the second year. He participated in the presentation of a magic show that was shown at the Metropol Theater. His goal is to strive to deepen the bonds between the professors and students and eliminate the cycle of fear of professors, as well as to strengthen student activities.

The student Majdi 'Abd-al-Mun'im Mahmud, fourth-year student in the Faculty of Principles of Religion, interpretation branch, was elected secretary of the hiking committee and has obtained a rating of "good" throughout his years of study.

With respect to his program, he says that he is thinking of holding a number of cultural and religious symposia in which the role of young people in the current stage can be set forth so that young people can be given religious, cultural and moral guidance.

Concerning his activity outside the university, he says that he is member of the social leaders in the al-Qulali pioneer's club, in which he gives anti-illiteracy courses and religious lectures to people who attend.

The student Muhammad al-Saghir Farid al-Gayyid, in the third year of journalism and the media in the Arabic Language Faculty, was elected secretary of the hiking and public service committee and secretary of the faculty federation. He says that he was elected secretary of the hiking committee in the faculty for 3 successive years. He is an exceptional student who has obtained a rating of "good" throughout his years of study in the faculty. He says, "I am now solving emergency problems that students come up against; these are many and diverse, especially inside al-Azhar University, and I consider that the greatest service that can be performed for students is to help them solve their problems."

The student Rif'at Muhammad al-Siba'i, in the third year of the history branch of the Arabic Language Faculty and secretary of the social and excursion committee, is working in the federation to help students in social fields, for instance by distributing loans to needy students and facilitating the students' task of obtaining meal tickets, as well as setting up a Red Crescent Society.

He says that he has visited some archaeological sites in some countries through the "Know Your Country" program.

Service For Out-of-town Students

The student 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Sayyid 'Allam, in the fourth year of the Faculty of Religious Principles, who is secretary of the social and excursion committee, was a federation member in the social and excursion committee last year. Last year his rating was "very good."

Concerning his recommendations, he says, "I propose that a consumer complex be set up to serve out-of-town students."

In conclusion, there is great hope and the picture inspires optimism. There remain serious efforts and the exertion of much effort for the sake of a sound student and university society.

11987

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PROMINENT COMMENTATOR CONDEMNS RESTRICTIONS ON PRESS

Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 7 Dec 81 p 4

[Article by Ahmad Baha'-al-Din: "The Egyptian Press and the Unconstitutional Laws!]

[Text] The move President Husni Mubarak made in releasing the main political detainees in Egypt was a splendid step forward on the road to democracy and the national reconciliation Egypt most intensely needs in this stage.

The release of these detainees was not a surprise; perhaps we were the first to forecast it, following a spur of the moment trip to Cairo.

However, half of politics lies in "political productions."

It was the production of the decree that was politically the real surprise.

President Mubarak did not issue the decree releasing the detainees in an ordinary way; rather, cars took them from the prisons directly to the president's office, where the president greeted them with warmth, affection and respect. Radio and television cameras and dozens of international and local journalists were waiting for them. The decree was not one abrogating an unjust, unconstitutional decree; it was a political declaration in the highest context and at the highest level, to the effect that the word "democracy" was to have meaning.

This imposes a responsibility on the president which is on the order of his great act, and imposes on the opposition a corresponding responsibility on the order of the manner in which it has been handled.

I have not always been in agreement with everything that everyone in the opposition says, but that is another matter; it was indeed sorrowful that the press should make propaganda in favor of their detention, then, 2 months later, make propaganda in favor of their release. That is not to blame anyone, but the objective circumstances that are imposed on the press have dictated this, and that has caused the press to lose all trust among the masses.

I am not blaming the Egyptian press, in which I was raised and to which I return, but I am recording the importance of this point for a reason which I will explain in a few lines.

This is because a more serious, greater step awaits President Mubarak: Once again, I am not trying to rush him or asking for haste, but just want to put it on his packed, intense, serious agenda.

The president inherited a constitution which people might differ over, but whose provisions must be maintained for awhile, as stability is being established. However, he has inherited a strange web of unconstitutional laws and no one will dispute their being described as such. Unconstitutional laws cannot be rectified by being issued parliaments or under exceptional circumstances. An unconstitutional wrong is an absolute wrong.

Among these are the Law on the Supreme Press Council, which makes the press a fourth power, though the press has nothing to do with power, and the property by law of the Consultative Assembly, - which is another entity of dubious constitutionality, being one that is appointed by the president and the head of the ruling party and one whose appointments there are no rules.

It is no secret that the purpose behind this complex "law" was to restrict the freedom of the press, not unchain it, and it was called the "fourth power" only as a slap in the face; that made it a direct power of the government and deprived the press of its meaning.

What prompts one to hasten to pay attention to this issue are the attempts we are observing on the part of some forces to hasten to apply the unconstitutional Press Law, which is complex and impractical. This calls on us to demand not that it be abrogated, but that its execution be postponed, at least.

The authorities who issued the law failed to carry it out for a whole year, because of its practical problems. What is the meaning of attempting to implicate a new authority in it so hastily?

The problem of the press is a serious one. In Egypt, it has become extremely complex. I very much doubt that there is anyone who has a clear idea on a radical solution to the problem of what is called the nationwide press. The subject here has no connection whatever with personalities. However, as we strive to turn toward a life that is free from nonobjective motives and doubletalk we must think at length and seriously about the subject of the Egyptian press, which has become more complex than al-Sabb's tail as the old Arab saying has it.

To hasten to prompt the authorities into a "minefield" of unconstitutional laws that have not been carefully studied, in which the view of people with opinions of substance is not heard, is uninnocent meddling.

We request that everyone refrain from these approaches in dealing with the new power, which does not want to be constructive and just and set out stable unshakeable foundations!

Let the execution of the new Press Law be suspended long enough so that everyone can think in peace, and for the sake of the public interest first of all; let us take part in helping the new president by forgetting personal scores for a while.

11887

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PROBLEMS OF IMPORTED FOOD SPOILAGE REVIEWED

Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 4 Jan 82 p 3

[Article by Muhammad Abu-al-Shuhud: "Let Us Not Eat Food Which Harbors Death and Sickness in Imported Cellophane Wrappers!"]

[Text] We do not want to be unjust to anyone.

Nor do we want anyone to be unjust to everyone in Egypt.

The ones who are unjust to everyone in Egypt are a group of persons who breathe Egyptian air alongside us, but, in the absence of conscience and the absence of true surveillance, have sought to reap illicit profits at the expense of the health of the people here. They are not concerned when school pupils are poisoned by rotten cheese or when a student in the Law Faculty dies as a result of rotten food that comes in an imported can. They are not concerned when thousands of mothers grieve over their children; they are not concerned when homes are locked to the tears of wives and children in the evenings at the loss of their loved ones who have eaten spoiled food!

What does concern them is a quick handsome profit, even if that is illicit and occurs at the expense of the health of the people in this fine country. Therefore we repeat that we do not want to be unjust to anyone.

The facts alone will speak. They will speak out with proof and figures; they will fearlessly point fingers of accusation at everyone who has let himself be seduced and whom the devil has goaded to seek to sell people rotten goods and feed members of this public food that will destroy them.

AL-AHRAM presents this series of journalistic investigations and presents the people only with the truth; it is not infringing on anyone except with the truth, and wants nothing but safety for this country and health and vigor for the people in it!

At the outset, [let us say that] two shipments of foodstuffs reached Port Said last week and were subjected to contradictory rulings!

The first shipment consisted of 5,825 tons of frozen Brazilian poultry for which the Supply Commodity Authority had made a contract. That arrived at Port Said on the ship Wintersea last 5 October and was inspected by a joint committee of the Customs Food Surveillance [Committee], Veterinary Quarantine and the Export and Import

Surveillance Department. Samples of the shipment were then sent to Health Ministry laboratories in Cairo, while unloading of the shipment continued from 13 October to 4 December. Then came the analysis results, rejecting the shipment!

The Ministry of Health then retreated and determined that the shipment was to be cleared on the evening of 17 December!

The contradiction between the two rulings led to a conflict in their interpretation. After they had been sent to the governor, Sayyid Sirhan, informing him that the first rejection notification had been improper and that that was a corrective measure that had been voided by explicit statements in the notice, they were reiterated in the words of a senior health official, who asserted to him, in a telephone conversation, that the original rejection ruling had been issued by the Health Ministry laboratories but that the responsibility for the second one was borne by a joint health and veterinary committee, and that both interpretations were in violation of information which confirmed that analysis of most of the samples, which had been sent in equal amounts to the health and veterinary laboratories in Cairo, had revealed that there was a high proportion of salmonella, much in excess of the maximum of 20 percent sanitarily permissible in frozen poultry.

The second shipment consisted of 2,311.72 tons of frozen fish (mackerel) sent to the account of the Supply Commodity Authority. That arrived at Port Said on 13 November 1981 packed in 99,092 crates. Unloading of the ship commenced on 22 November 1981 and was completed on 26 December 1981. The shipment was delivered to the Egyptian Fish Marketing Company and was stored under Health Ministry detention after samples of it were taken under health and veterinary supervision and sent out 23 November 1981; the results of the analysis were received on 16 December 1981, rejecting the shipment on health grounds. The Health Ministry did not mention the circumstances related to the rejection; the governor wrote the minister of health, asking him to explain whether or not the ruling was final.

A week after that a strange telegram arrived, couched in the height of contradictory terms, suspending the rejection measures. This obscure reference did not settle the ruling; the measures stayed suspended and no approach in their regard was taken on whether to clear or destroy the shipment.

The contradictions in the issuance and then retraction of the rejection decree were the dominant feature regarding many shipments of meat, poultry and fish arriving at Port Said which were subjected to health analysis by two laboratories, chemical and bacteriological in Port Said before October 1980, when a decree was issued to the effect that the central laboratories in Cairo were to perform the task of analysis, although the two Port Said laboratories were competent to do it. This decree was the culmination of contradictory decrees that moved jurisdiction over the analysis from the Health Ministry laboratories in Port Said to Cairo. This contradiction in decrees also involved the analysis of canned meat; in the second half of last year, five decrees were issued transferring jurisdiction for the analysis between the laboratories in the two cities!

The latest shipment of frozen goods was analyzed in Port Said in October, on a shipment of meat that totalled 2,311 tons. The chemical laboratory rejected the shipment on sanitary grounds and the Ministry of Health then demanded samples of it for analysis in Cairo; there a ruling was issued that it was fit, and it was cleared!

After that, the number of rejection rulings began to decline. Laboratory investigations in the central laboratories laid the groundwork for the rejection decrees on other shipments and established their unfitness, but, in spite of that exceptional rulings were issued clearing them, as was the case with a shipment of frozen fish on 25 November 1980.

With the transfer of the task of analyzing meat, fish and poultry to the Cairo laboratories about 14 months ago, the Port Said laboratories were left to analyze the remaining categories of food. Analysis procedures are preceded by the presentation by the importer of a certificate of analysis from internationally accredited laboratories in the exporting countries. These measures are also accompanied by an Export and Import Surveillance Office review of the date of production, and the procedure followed when the volume of shipment exceeds 500 tons is that the Cairo laboratories take part in analyzing half the samples and the final ruling rests with the Ministry of Health in Cairo. The law allows the owners of shipments to protest against the Port Said laboratory rulings, in which case samples are sent to the health laboratories in Cairo for analysis, and again the Ministry of Health has the final ruling. Cases where clearances are given after rejections are often repeated.

There are strange tales about shipments of this type, including, for example:

A shipment of herring arrived for the account of the private sector and the Port Said laboratories observed worms inside the fish. After that it considered that a health clearance should not be granted in accordance with Law 10 for 1966, which stipulates that clearance should not be granted for foodstuffs if they seem to contain live or dead worms. In spite of that, after the owner of the shipment complained, the Ministry of Health cleared it on grounds that the worms were not harmful!

In the case of another shipment, also for the private sector, consisting of peaches which did not conform to specifications, their importer complained, and instructions then reached the Port Said laboratories to the effect that the analysis should be confined to the containers (that is the boxes themselves) and not the contents; since the boxes were not rusty, the shipment was cleared in violation of the rules of analysis which stipulate that the food should be fit first of all, and then their containers!

A third story concerned a shipment of coconuts to the private sector that contained a high degree of humidity which was favorable for the propagation of fungi and bacteria. The laboratory determined that the coconuts were unfit and detained them, since to clear them and have them stored with merchants would increase the probability that bugs and worms would proliferate inside the coconuts. After a complaint from the importer to the ministry, a strange ruling was sent down in effect permitting clearance of the shipment after its owner had committed himself to using it for making halva. The ruling said that the lesson was that processed halva was suitable and if it turned out that it had been poisoned, that is, was short of oil, it would have been confiscated. Customs cleared the shipment.

It happened that the Ministry of Health contradicted the rulings of its laboratory in Port Said and ordered that packages of meat be released which technicians in the laboratory had retained because they contained a humidity in excess of 60 percent. After the profits that the importer realized through the clearance of his shipment, he distributed it to retailers who offered it on the market; thus it was accessible

to food department inspectors who had been assigned to conduct oversight on goods in the market, and it happened more than once that these packages were analyzed and the laboratories repeated the same detention rulings in their regard.

There are dozens of cases of this sort in the courts of Port Said. After some controversy, the Ministry of Health considered that the task of analyzing the packages should also be taken away from the Port Said laboratories, and the deputy minister issued the food department instructions prohibiting the chemical reanalysis of any packages the ministry had exempted and cleared!

More than one instance has stressed that the exemption rulings were not based on scientific or sanitary foundations; these included the clearance of a shipment of preserved meats and the detention of another, although they were similar to one another in terms of specifications and possessed identical characteristics!

In any event, importers of this sort of cargo can protest against overt inspection committee rulings; in addition, the final decree is the business of the Ministry of Health!

Usually the period of analysis extends for about a month, if that is done by veterinary health laboratories in Cairo. Even when the analysis procedures are carried out in the health laboratories in Port Said, it becomes necessary to wait for the results of the analysis from the veterinary laboratories in Cairo in the case of frozen commodities, and these must be subjected to veterinary examination. In cases of differences in health and veterinary laboratory rulings, the final ruling lies with the Ministry of Health.

All these measures take time, during which the importer, be that the private, government or public sector, pays space charges for storing the commodity in shipping agency warehouses or refrigerators. In addition, lengthy storage periods result in pileups in the port and the shipments are probably exposed to damage. On top of that, there are the demurrage charges the government pays for the period the ship has to wait in port.

These are charges which have entailed terrific amounts of money in past years. Port of Said Authority statistics show that just during 9 months of the current year the government paid \$5,110,670 in demurrage charges for 60 ships transporting meat, wheat, flour, corn and sugar.

The main reasons for these fines may be basically attributed to a failure to schedule arrivals and guide supply ships in Egyptian ports, and this results in the phenomenon of pileups in these ports.

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BRIEFS

COLLUSION WITH PRESS INVESTIGATION--One hundred journalists have sent the head of the Journalists' Union a memorandum demanding an investigation into the incident where an article by the lawyer 'Abd-al-Fattah Hasan was submitted to the investigating authorities instead of being published in AL-MUSAWWAR magazine. Here is the text of the memorandum: "The newspaper AL-AHRAR stated that Mr Sabri Abu-al-Majd received an article on the Nile water from the lawyer Mr 'Abd-al-Fattah Hasan, when Sabri Abu-al-Majd was editor in chief of AL-MUSAWWAR; however, he did not publish it, but rather sent it to the investigative authorities, who in turn sent it to the socialist prosecutor during the investigation into Mr 'Abd-al-Fattah Hasan, as material accompanying the charge. If this statement is correct, we find that unlikely in the case of Mr Sabri abu-al-Majd, in view of the ill that would reflect on him and on the profession of journalism and journalists. Therefore we hope for an investigation into the statements that have been raised on this incident, in order to show what the facts are, so that our public image as journalists will be more reasonable. If this charge is correct, we hope that it will be handed over to the disciplinary council and that the penalty imposed upon him is published." [Text] [Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 7 Dec 81 p 1/ 11887

TELEPHONE SERVICE MISMANAGEMENT--In his weekly meeting with the masses to resolve their problems, Eng Ahmad Kamil, chairman of the National Telecommunications Authority, declared that the manager of Section One, Eng 'Abd-al-Hadi 'Abd-al-Mu'ti, had been transferred to the Followup Section and that Eng 'Ali al-Buhayri, manager of the Shubra section, had also been transferred, because they had been negligent in eliminating telephone breakdowns and had not committed themselves to specific schedules for repairing breakdowns, and because there was a greater [than normal] percentage of breakdowns in these two sections. In addition, he decided to transfer all al-Ma'ari telephone office employees because of numerous complaints from users and mistreatment of the public. At the same time Eng Ahmad Kamil, chairman of the authority, declared that a bonus of 200 pounds was to be paid to Eng Muhammad Salim, manager of the al-Zamalik and al-Duqqi sections, and Eng 'Abd-al-Mu'ti Husayn, manager of the Madinat Nasr and al-'Abbasiyah sections, because of their steadfast followup to eliminate breakdowns and responses to investigate complaints from the public. [Excerpt] [Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 21 Dec 81 p 1/ 11887

PETTY CRIMINALS APPREHENDED--Last week 4,720 accused persons were arrested in the context of the campaign the Cairo Security Department has carried out to arrest escaped convicts, registered pickpockets, juveniles and gang members. [Text] [Cairo AKHBAR AL-YAUM in Arabic 26 Dec 81 p 1/ 11887

SUBSIDIZED CLOTHING--Public sector shops which are carrying out the program for subsidized clothing for government and public sector employees will start selling this clothing in nine shops in the Governorate of Cairo to about 4.5 million families next Friday. Sales will start in various governorates in coming weeks. The program is to be applied to police officers, policemen, members of the armed forces and public sector unit employees on pension for the first time. Mr Sayyid al-Misri, first deputy supply minister, stated that he would offer 65 /million/ items of readymade clothing, 25 million of which will be produced by the public sector, valued at 30 million pounds, and 40 million of which will be produced by the public sector, valued at 30 million pounds, in addition to 30 million items of imported clothing. The sales prices of clothing produced locally have been set at a rate of 3 pounds to 345 piasters for men's shirts, 175 piasters for women's skirts, 390 piasters for women's dresses, 190 piasters for children's trousers, 250 piasters for women's pyjamas and 180 piasters for men's pyjamas. New types imported from Yugoslavia and Hungary will be offered for sale at a price of 13 million pounds, with children's outfits at 150 piasters, children's suits at 175 piasters, women's dresses at 275 piasters, women's nightgowns at 275 piasters, girl's pyjamas at 250 piasters, men's suits at 12 pounds and women's overcoats at 650 /piasters/ to 11 pounds. The sale of subsidized clothing will start beginning next February in public sector shop branches in the Governorates of Aswan, Iina, Suez and al-Sharqiyah. /Text/ /Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 5 Jan 81 /sic/ p 8/ 11887

CSD: 4504/155

DISPATCH OF TROOPS TO FIGHT ISRAEL DISCUSSED

Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 1 Feb 82 pp 1, 2

[Article by Musavian]

[Text]

FINALLY AFTER about twenty years during which he claims struggle against Israel and Zionism, King Hussain has declared a 'war', not against the Zionists but against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

After Israel's usurpation and occupation of the most sacred lands of Islam and Moslems as far back as 1947, the reactionary Arab heads of state have always sought to fight Israel only through talks and conferences! At conclusion of each meeting, they would all promise to practically enter into a war against Zionist enemy!

But it was only as recently as 1982 that to their absolute shame, and impudently, Saudi Arabia speaking on behalf of other henchmen holding similar views, declares that if enmity to Israel and its master, the US, did not stand to benefit the Arabs, they must then compromise with Israel!

A few days following this decision which took them 35 years to make, without necessity for further meetings and summits, King Hussein announces a war against Iran's Islamic Revolution and is the first mercenary to enter into war against Iranian Moslems.

Then Al-Qabas, a Kuwaiti daily, proclaims that this declaration of war against the Islamic revolution had to be viewed as a focal point in the history of the Arabs.

Meanwhile, the mufti of the Jordanian royal court who has been in the pay of Washington for several years to issue fatvahs (religious decisions) which would ultimately be in the interests of the US and its mercenaries, declares that the war against the Islamic Republic is the promised 'holy Jihad' of the Qoran. He also urged the Jordanian people to volunteer to foray into Iranian territory occupied by the Baathist Saddam and shed the blood of uprising Iranian Moslems for the sake of God!

Though these incidents may surprise some, it is not a matter of wonder to Iranian Moslems and the majority of the world's Moslems.

Was it not King Hussein who laid Jerusalem at the disposal of the Zionists and did nothing to retake it? And was he not the one who massacred thousands of Palestinians during "Black September?"

And is not King Hussein the man in whose bed the CIA is present as his 'wife'? It is, therefore, no wonder then that such a traitor who laid all his country's provisions at the disposal of Saddam from the beginning of the Iraqi imposed war against Iran, embarks on mobilizing Jordanian forces against the Islamic revolution.

What is our position in this? We have accepted as an axiom the liberation of Moslem nations and the oppressed of the world, and in this we Iranian Moslems are prepared to pay the heaviest price and willingly too conscious that this accords with the attainment of our Divine goals.

The Iranian nation it was that consigned the ex-shah to the dungeon of history by dedicating 60 thousand martyrs and 100 thousand disabled in the cause of Islam. It has already sacrificed thousands of its chivalrous children and lost billions of dollars in order to extirpate that other American mercenary, Saddam Hussein. We are confident that this great Moslem nation is prepared to face more losses, dedicate still more martyrs and suffer physical and material injury if it will serve to raise the banner of "La Ilaha Il Allah" over the world and revive the faith of Muhammad (SAW) by seeing an end to the domination of the exploiters and the establishment of justice across the world.

But for the Islamic Revolution, it would have been many years before the American nature of people such as King Hussein, Saddam Hussein and King Khaled was revealed to the public. It is clear then that the Islamic Revolution has turned out to be the criteria for the revelation of the true identities of these rulers and the direction of their regimes.

It is regrettable though that regimes such as those of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Jordan, Bahrain, Oman and others attuned with the US and Israel, are opposing the Islamic Revolution. Yet it is still true that more even than through the spending of billion of dollars, no proof could be more convincing to the world's Moslems that all these regimes only follow the will and interests of the US and Israel. than the Islamic Revolution.

This, in fact, is the grace of Allah on the Moslem masses.

If Saddam had not proceeded on a war against Iran's Islamic revolution, he would have probably continued his dictatorial rule over the Iraqi Moslem nation. But with his invasion of Iran, he has cut tens of years from his own life and brought his downfall nearer. We do not doubt that the blows suffered by the Iraqi Moslem people in the war are not less than those which might have been inflicted upon them in the future years of Saddam's rule through the wastage of Iraqi Moslem resources and killing of Iraqi militant Moslems.

We, therefore, welcome the declaration of war against the Islamic revolution by King Hussein of Jordan enthusiastically and await the day when other reactionary Arab governments such as Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt which are clandestinely fighting against Islamic Iran, will openly embark on war against us.

It is beyond doubt that there is no way we can possibly reach Qods without walking over these animalistic creatures. If these regimes did ever want to do away with Zionists, they could surely have done so during these 35 years considering their illimitable underground resources and manpower which they own. But after all these years, they have only come to recognize Israel officially!

There is no doubt too, that even though there are Arabic irreligious regimes which propagate 'Arabism' despite claiming to be progressive, the Arab nations are not racists. They are God worshippers and they have no preference for 'Arabism' over 'Islamism' and thus fighting the Iranian Moslems is unthinkable to them. They are sure that the enemies of Islam are the US, Russia and International Zionism and not Iran.

The Arab people are awaiting the day they will conquer Qods along with their Iranian Moslem brothers and the dispatch of the first Iranian squadron named the 'Golan squadron' in the near future to the Israeli borders, is the herald of such a day.

May the expedition of the first Iranian troops for fighting against Israel be blessed and may the new movement of King Hussein of Jordan along with Israel and the US to oppose the Islamic revolution lead to auspicious results.

by MUSAVIAN

BANI-SADR'S AIDE 'REVEALS BEHIND-THE-SCENES PLOTS'

Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 4 Feb 82 p 1

[Text]

AHMAD GHAZANFAR-PUR, one of the aides to ousted President Abolhasan Bani-sadr, who was recently arrested in a hideout in north of the country has appealed for forgiveness to the Moslem nation, the Imam and the Islamic Consultative Assembly.

A translation of the text of the letter published in Jomhuri Islami, a Persian daily reads as follows:

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Were it not for the vigilant presence of the people on the scene, and the competent and decisive leadership of the Imam, the Islamic Revolution of Iran would have deviated from its genuine path and fallen into the lap of Superpowers undoubtedly the U.S.

"As an element involved in such a current, I apologize to the Moslem nation, the Imam and the revered deputies of the Majlis and pray to God Almighty to accept my repentance.

"I also ask the Islamic courts to sentence me to death if the penalty for my crimes amounts to execution as I have already submitted to the Divine Justice.

"The measures taken by the groups opposing Velayat-e-Faqih (the Islamic Jurisprudence's supervision over the affairs) can be outlined as:

1- Paving the way for the penetration of opposition to Velayat-e-Faqih into the Revolutionary organs and mustering support in the Majlis through those who have different opinion, which is in contradiction to the majority view.

2- Bringing up various questions in speeches and writings which only served to stimulate discord.

3- Spreading of degrading rumors on the prominent personalities who are committed to the principle of Velayat-e-Faqih.

Thus, they were many pocket opposition groups on the loose, though creating two main currents in the society, on the one hand those opposing the Velayat-e-Faqih formed one current while on the other those who believed in the principle of Velayat-e-Faqih.

However, the opposition groups all got attracted towards Bani-sadr who made himself the pivot of opposition to the Islamic Revolution. Placed in the lap of such a current, Bani-sadr negated his previous stand, which atleast superficially seemed to support Imam and his line.

Before the Revolution, he, Bani-sadr, believed that no Islamic Revolution can come about if it is absent of a wide-dimensional unity between the clergy and the intellectuals.

But with the passing of each day, realization of his eventual defeat became more apparent for him since the clergy's presence in the political scene of the country bared the true nature of the Revolution, which was the bond of unity between the clergy and the nation.

Bani-sadr's books and lectures, those pertaining to the period prior to the construction of the Islamic constitution, stressed on the principle of spreading power through councils. He also stressed on the presence of people on the political scenario of the country, but suddenly, upon taking the presidential office, he gyrated 180 degrees, attacking self-emanated organs (such as committees). He also rejected the idea of councils and laid emphasis on a classic army rather than a popular force.

Interesting to note is Bani-sadr always propagated that no revolutionary objectives could be achieved if devoid of a united and coordinated group, balanced on a common ideological axis. But, practically, all those who had gathered around him lacked all such qualities.

In my opinion, the origin of these contradictions can be found in the lack of faith in the Imam's leadership.

The coordination between his camp and the other anti-revolutionary leftist and rightist forces was based upon:

1- Lack of faith (and in regards to some groups, partial faith) in the principle of Velayat-e-Faqih.

2- Eradication of clergy from the political scene.

3- Opposition to self-emanating organs.

4- Getting closer to the US line, (despite the claims of Banisadr and Munafeqin (MKO) for opposing America and propagating for independence).

Despite their own ideological differences, the forces which formed the current were: the well off groups, National Front, the office of President and its affiliated offices, the MKO and moderates such as Liberation Movement.

In order to achieve its goals, the above mentioned current had adopted various tactics prior to and after the revolution.

They spread false news and numerous rumors, made mountains out of ant-hills by magnifying negligible deficiencies, and at the same time submitted wrong data and analysis to the president's office, such as, application of torture in the prisons, illegal acts committed by the courts, dissatisfaction among the majority of people with the Islamic regime, the impending collapse of the government etc.

Banisadr, in turn would vainly bring these matters up in his speeches and thus was injecting an attitude of indifference among people.

The current's next steps were: to substitute people on the scene, with well-off groups to destroy the popular support of organs and forces in the line of Imam, dissolution of the Majlis, attacking Martyr Rajai's government, creating discord in the ranks of people, to infuse a spirit of comfort-seeking attitude in place of resistance against economic pressures, and to sow the seed of discord among the ranks of clergy.

Meanwhile, the MKO was organizing demonstrations, the National Front was recruiting new members and thus all such forces were preparing to replace the government and as the head of the opposition, Banisadr had become a loud-speaker for all such factions.

But all their plans fizzled out through the dismissal of Banisadr from the post of Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and the people's rejection of the National Front's demonstration.

"I heard one of my friends in the prison as saying that it was Banisadr who unleashed the wave of terrorist acts against the prominent personalities through his aide Nawab Safavi which also enveloped Friday prayers.

Even the unhindered flight of Banisadr and Rajavi from Iran to a French military airport showed that it was not a simple event.

Now through the passing of time, I have come to realize the Truth.

"Which current could push the country toward reestablishing ties with foreign powers and dictatorship? And can a current believing in Velayat-e-Faqih relying on Islamic piety and ethics and the popular forces end up in establishing dictatorship?

"I am now convinced that the current led by Banisadr would have ultimately inflicted the country with dictatorship and ties with foreign powers.

"I hereon address Banisadr and Rajavi that "if you think that you can ever substitute the Islamic regime, you are totally wrong and mistaken.

The victories in the battle fronts, the amalgamation of popular forces with the classic army, the wide-scale integration of the overwhelming majority of people and the unity established between all organs will undoubtedly solve all economic problems. Besides, the people and their leader's faith in God (a factor you did not take into account and thus ended where you are) is the most important matter to be considered.

The Imperialist and Zionist networks are trying to groom you to substitute the Islamic regime but such propaganda can never affect the Moslem people of Iran.

There is only one way to save yourselves and that is - as the Imam has said time again - to earnestly repent and save yourselves and others from drowning in the sea of corruption.

You claim that there is duress, torture and tension in the prisons, but as a prisoner, I declare to the world that there is nothing of that sort in the Islamic prisons and that the prisons have turned out to be reformatory and training schools.

You claim the terrorist acts to be a logical outcome of the government administered executions, but the fact is totally contrary to it. As a matter of fact more freedom has been exercised whenever terrorist acts subsided.

"I state these matters only for the pity I feel for the deviated ones."

I hope that what I brought up (in this letter) will serve to enlighten those who still may have a little wisdom left in them.

DEPUTY ANNOUNCES RESULTS OF ECONOMIC TALKS IN ITALY

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 24 Jan 82 p 4

[Interview with Dr Banki, chief of Plan and Budget Organization]

[Text] The minister without portfolio and chief of the Plan and Budget Organization, who recently traveled to Italy as the head of a political and economic commission, explained the results of his trip in a talk yesterday. Also, in this talk, the members of the above-mentioned commission announced the results of their talks with Italian authorities.

First, Dr Banki pointed out the goals of this trip and said: We have left behind an inactive period created by Bani-Sadr's obstinacy and untruthfulness in which our activities were stagnated. But, now, sufficient grounds have been prepared and the trip to Italy is a perfect example of this readiness. He added: With the formation of the "headquarters for coordination of foreign economic relations" in the Ministry of Foreign Affaris, which works toward coordinating and increasing economic activities with foreign countries, we hope that these activities expand even more. Dr Banki said: This trip certainly had positive results for both countries. Talks took place concerning the completion, as soon as possible, of developmental projects. Noting that we are devising programs for economic development in Iran, we spoke to the Italian authorities in the area of commercial and economic relations. Also on this trip, we made it clear to the Italian authorities that Italy's purchase of oil from those countries whose goal in selling oil is to take the money and deposit it in American banks is not in the best interests of Italy. Rather, it is in the best interests of Italy to purchase the oil it needs from countries such as Iran, because Iran uses its oil as a means to pay for its needs. In this way, in mutual cooperation with Iran, the economic problems of Italy will also be resolved to a significant degree. For this purpose, an Italian oil company will soon come to Iran for talks. After the statements of Dr Banki, the representative of the Ministry of Energy in the above-mentioned commission said: On this trip, various issues concerning electricity

were discussed in three parts. The first part consisted of eliminating the shortcomings and technical problems of Iran's previous contractors. The second part consisted of discussions about contracts for providing the future electricity of the country and the third part concerned the financial issues between Iran and various Italian companies. We asked the Italian authorities to send commissions to Iran for this purpose. Also, considering the fact that all the previous contracts were carried out by contracting companies, we would like the project to be carried out by Iranian experts, using Italian specialists only when necessary. He added: We discussed the building of a 320-megawatt power station in Esfahan. The contract will be signed after the issues are resolved. Also, we invited them to build 700 km of high voltage lines between Sirjan-Yazd and Sirjan-Shiraz. The contract will be signed after the necessary studies have been made and the company to be given the contract is chosen. Also, discussions were held about providing equipment and parts needed for drinking water and agriculture and the use of the experiences of the Italian specialists in the operation and implementation of the plan for the completion of Canals 3 and 4 behind the existing dams in the country, given Italy's long experience in these areas. Then, the representative of the industrial sector in the commission said about the results of the talks in this area: On this trip, the implementation of the past projects of Iran with the government of Italy and the projects which are being carried out were studied. Also, the plan for the steel complex--which was supposed to be built by Italian experts in Bandar 'Abbas but, after the revolution and after the studies made, the decision was made that it be transferred to Mobarekeh, Esfahan--was studied. The machinery needed for this complex is about ready and, in the near future, the equipment will be sent to Iran. Also, other projects were discussed on this trip in regards to the interests of Iran, including a factory for manufacturing automobile tires in Iran, the contract for which was signed during the past regime by only one party. Also, new projects were discussed with Italian authorities, including machine manufacturing, food and animal husbandry industries, and spare parts manufacturing for trucks, buses, automobiles, etc. In the area of ship building, too, should the conditions set by Iran be accepted by Italy, in the future, several ships will be ordered from that country. We will also cooperate with that country in building small ships. Furthermore, in regards to making parts, we also hope to benefit from Italy's experiences and its new port building methods in Qeshm and Jask.

We also held discussions to expedite the implementation of the new dock project of Bandar 'Abbas, which is being done by the Italians. Then, the representative of the Ministry of Commerce pointed out the results of the talks of the Iranian commission with the Italian authorities, saying: On the whole, in the area of commerce, the position of the Islamic Republic on foreign trade and its nationalization and the purchasing centers which have been established in this

regard were clarified. We announced that in the area of foreign trade, we will cooperate with those countries who have a clear position with regard to Iran on the basis of mutual economic cooperation. In addition, the sale of oil was discussed. It was clarified for the Italian authorities that the government of Iran, in contrast to the past regime, intends to use this resource for technological transformation. In exchange for the purchase of manufactured and consumer goods, items such as traditional products, carpets, hides, dry goods, and oil products will be exported to Italy. It was decided that from Sep 82, Italy will buy a larger share of Iranian oil. At the end of the talk, the director-general of economic affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said, concerning the talks of this commission with Italian authorities: We will cooperate with countries which have friendly relations with Iran and are willing to have mutual cooperation. On this trip, the head of the Iranian economic commission spoke to the authorities in the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Budget, Industries and Foreign Trade of that country emphasizing the expansion of economic relations. Also, in these visits and talks, the issue of the aggression of the functionary regime of Iraq, the U.S. conspiracies in the region, the Soviet aggression on Afghanistan, and the usurpation of the Golan Heights were discussed. The Italian authorities announced that without having been influenced by any foreign power, they are willing to expand relations with Iran. After the trip to Italy of the economic commission of the Islamic Republic, headed by Dr Mohammad Taqi Banki, the minister without portfolio and chief of the Plan and Budget Organization, and after some discussions were held, a joint communique was issued by the Plan and Budget Organization and the Italian authorities. The text of the communique is as follows:

After the high level economic commission of the Islamic Republic of Iran, headed by Dr Mohammad Taqi Banki, the minister without portfolio and chief of the Plan and Budget Organization, visited Italy from 18-22 Jan 82, the head of the commission of the Islamic Republic of Iran met and talked with the ministers of foreign affairs, planning and budget, industries, and foreign trade as well as the high ranking deputies of the Ministries of Industries, Foreign Affairs, and Government Partnerships. During these meetings, both sides expressed their wish and determination to expand friendly relations between the two nations. Other members of the Iranian commission also met and spoke with the representatives of various economic, governmental, and private sectors.

In the area of industries, both sides examined past cooperation on the plans and projects which are underway and reached an understanding to expedite the completion of these projects.

The Italians expressed satisfaction in Iran's interest in studying the postponed issues to find solutions acceptable to both sides.

Considering the emphasis of the Islamic Republic of Iran on agricultural, industrial, and mineral development, the resources for cooperation in the areas of light and heavy industries, the mechanization of agriculture, basic industries, and irrigation were determined.

Both sides also agreed that economic and commercial relations between the two countries should be based on a mutually balanced policy.

9593

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PRE-ELECTION MANEUVERINGS DISCUSSED

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic No 1312, 25 Dec 81 p 17

[Article by Ibrahim al-Birjawi: "If a Constitutional Vacuum Occurs, Gabi Lahud Would Become President and Ahmad al-Hajj Would Become Commander in Chief of the Army!"]

[Text] There are three subjects which occupy first place in the discussions and talks which are going on behind the scenes among political circles in Beirut.

The first of these subjects of discussion concerns what position President Ilyas Sarkis will take if the constitutional deadline set for electing the new president passes and the seventh president of the Independent Republic of Lebanon has not been elected. Concerning this subject, two proposals are being put forward, and it is said that President Sarkis will have to choose one of the two. The first proposal calls for utilizing a precedent which Shaykh Bisharah al-Khuri resorted to when he resigned and filled the constitutional vacuum by appointing Maj Gen Fu'ad Shihab, who at that time was commander in chief of the army, as president of state and thus as the person who would perform the duties of president and prime minister until the election of a new president—who turned out to be Camille Sham'un.

The second proposal calls for utilizing a precedent which the French high commissioner resorted to before Lebanon's independence when he filled the constitutional vacuum, resulting from the vacancy of the office of president, by choosing a president of state from the Greek Orthodox sect—who turned out to be Charles Dabbas.

In this connection it is said that the appointment of a Greek Orthodox president of state, until the election of a Maronite president, could be a compromise solution to a probable sectarian dispute. The leaders nominated to undertake such a temporary task are Ambassador Ghassan Tuwayni, Foreign Minister Fu'ad Butrus, and Michel al-Murr, the minister of post and telecommunications. The second of these two topics which are being dealt with behind the political scenes is the story of Gabi Lahud, former head of the Deuxieme Bureau in the Lebanese Army. In connection with this story they are saying that the State Advisory Council has issued an administrative ruling, on the basis of a claim brought forth by the former high-ranking officer and current businessman, which declares the man, who was prominent during the Shihab and Hilu administrations, innocent of all of the charges which he was convicted of by the Military Court under the government of Prime Minister Sa'id Salam during the administration of President Sulayman Franjiyah. In addition

to this, the State Advisory Council has advised that he be returned to active military service and that he have a right to all compensations and back-pay due him from the time of his forced retirement till the time of the implementation of this ruling--and this would entail an amount of more than 1 million Lebanese pounds. This would also include his right to all military promotions, and because of his seniority over Gen Victor Khuri, the commander in chief of the army, this would make him now outrank Gen Khuri.

After the ruling was issued by the Advisory Council, Gen Khuri made some high-level contacts. He requested that, in case the Advisory Council's ruling is put into effect, he be appointed Lebanon's ambassador in Vienna where his children are receiving their education and are living with their mother, who is Austrian by birth. It is said that Gen Khuri was informed that it is impossible to grant his request because our current ambassador in Vienna, "adil Hamiyah, has only been at his post for a few months and thus it would not be possible to transfer him. It was suggested that he be appointed ambassador to Uruguay or Cyprus.

However, Gabi Lahud did not go to the Office of Operations and request that the Advisory Council's ruling be implemented. This is the opposite of what everybody was expecting because they took it for granted that Lahud would not have brought his grievance to the Advisory Council unless he wanted to obtain a ruling in his favor which he intended to have implemented. We must bear in mind, though, that rulings by the Advisory Council are not binding on the government, which has the right to refuse to implement its rulings without giving any explanation or justification.

Circles close to Gabi Lahud assure us that, in case he demanded implementation of the Advisory Council's ruling, he would renounce all the financial entitlements which he would receive as back-pay and compensation and let the state treasury have all of this. But when it comes to the possibility of Lahud returning to the army--which is the second part of the ruling--circles close to him are of two different schools of thought concerning this matter. Those subscribing to one school of thought say that Lahud will not have all of the ruling implemented and that he only brought suit in order to be declared totally innocent of all of the charges which could be leveled against him--particularly by circles who would strongly oppose him in case political circumstances and the country's situation would provide him with an opportunity to have himself nominated as a candidate during the upcoming presidential elections. Prime Minister Sa'ib Salam does not expect that the election campaign will begin in earnest before next April and after the Israelis either have or have not withdrawn from Sinai. The people subscribing to this school of thought believe that if the Advisory Council's ruling were implemented it would cause Gabi Lahud to lose his opportunity to be elected president. The reason for this is that if the ruling were implemented Lahud would become a government employee and, according to law, a government employee does not have the right to be nominated until at least 6 months after he has left his government post. Here we should bear in mind that the latest deadline for holding the presidential elections is 9 months from now.

Those subscribing to the second school of thought feel that it is necessary for their friend Gabi Lahud to return to the armed forces and become commander in chief of the army. They have two reasons for holding this opinion--the important role which the army is expected to play in the near future, and anticipation of the

situation which might result in case Lebanon's internal and international situation comes under such pressure that it would be impossible for Lebanon to hold presidential elections. If this happens, it might force President Sarkis to resort to the precedent of entrusting the commander in chief of the army with the task of filling the constitutional vacuum and becoming president of state--thereby exercising the functions of both president and prime minister. If this happens, Gabi Lahud's friends say, their friend will have missed a valuable opportunity. In their opinion, this is an opportunity which Lahud should have, and they feel that, having such an opportunity, he might be able to use his personal influence, decisiveness, and intelligence to bring Lebanon out of a crisis which only God knows where it will lead the country. And Lebanon is no longer able to endure any new crises which would be on the level of this crisis. [Lahud's friends especially feel this way because] most of the army--and, above all, Gen Khuri himself--has the greatest respect and esteem for Lahud. In addition to this, his relations with the various domestic and [other] Arab parties in the Lebanese arena are good rather than bad. In fact his relations with some of the parties are excellent, in spite of the fact that these relations with a number of these parties were tense during the time when he was head of the Second Bureau during the administration of President Charles al-Kilu.

Which of these two schools of thought, held by his friends, will Gabi Lahud follow? Up till now nobody knows. He is still adhering to the principle of remaining "the great silent one"--which was started by President Shihab and then applied by all of his military and civilian disciples. However, it is certain that he did not obtain the ruling of the Advosiry Council in order to have it merely remain ink on paper, and without purpose. He is not that sort of man!

The third subject [in the discussions behind the scenes among political circles] is the issue of the future situation--to be more exact, after next March--of Maj Gen Ahmad al-Hajj of the general staff, who is the head of the internal security forces.

What does March have to do with it?

This is a question which is easy to ask but is not so easy to answer. The issue at hand is the fact that the new defense law prohibits any army officer, after March 1982, from being transferred to any post outside the army itself unless he resigns from the army. According to this law, Maj Gen al-Hajj is supposed to return to the army.

Two questions arise here. What will be Maj Gen al-Hajj's new status, and who will take his place as head of the internal security forces?

With regard to the first problem, Maj Gen Ahmad al-Hajj, member of the general staff--due to his seniority over Brig Gen Munir Tarabayh, the chief of staff--would outrank the man who occupies the second-highest position of command in the army, even if Brig Gen Tarabayh were promoted to major general. This is something which would be in violation of military practice and procedure. Furthermore, it would not be permitted to promote him to general because in the Lebanese Army there is only one general--the commander in chief of the army.

Some people have suggested that he be appointed commander in chief of the army and have seen in this step the solution to some of the objections and reservations

concerning the situation of the army. But the suggestion was discarded not because Lebanon's politically-active groups object to Maj Gen al-Hajj himself, who is highly regarded by them. Opposition to the suggestion was based on traditional considerations in the country which have become tantamount to things which are taken for granted and involve matters which should not be infringed upon by many people. In addition to this, higher authorities believe that the appointment, in general, of a Muslim as commander in chief of the army, and the appointment, in particular, of Maj Gen al-Hajj will not solve the problem of the objections being raised concerning the army. Others have suggested that Maj Gen al-Hajj resign from the army after being promoted to general and be appointed ambassador to Uruguay or Cyprus. It is believed that this is the suggestion which will be followed, although the army, if this happens, would be losing a man of many abilities and great capability--which Maj Gen al-Hajj undoubtedly is.

There are two opinions concerning the matter of whom to appoint as successor to Maj Gen al-Hajj as head of the internal security forces. One of these opinions supports the appointment of Brig Gen Tabarah, the commander of the Beirut Police Force, in view of the fact that he is an officer in the police force. The second opinion is in favor of having this post be returned to civilian hands as it was in the days of Mahmud al-Banna and Hisham al-Sha'ar. And the names of many candidates have been suggested for this job!

9468

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ECONOMIC TRENDS IN 1981 REVIEWED

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic No 1313, 1 Jan 82 p 30

[Article by 'Adnan Karimah: "Lebanese Entrepreneurs Postpone Their Investments - 1981 Was the Worst of the War Years, and the Government Covered Its Deficit by Means of Loans!"]

[Text] What does the year 1982 have in store for us with regard to developments in the Lebanese economy, in view of the fact that the entrepreneurs have decided to postpone their investments since the last 7 years have been leans ones? The only optimism which one hears now when discussing [the Lebanese economy] is the saying that "destruction is followed by reconstruction."

At the end of every year economists engage in the process of assessing and analyzing the developments of economic activity which has taken place during the year, and they make their projections for the coming year. According to the experts, 1980 was economically speaking a good year. In fact they consider it to have been one of the best years during the war years--perhaps the best one of all. Statistics indicate that the Lebanese economy made progress on most fronts in its efforts to regain its health. However, their projections for 1981 were not encouraging. This was due to the condition of political instability and instability in terms of security, not only in Lebanon but also in the entire Middle East.

In order to have a better understanding of this, details must be given. Let us begin by talking about capital, since capital is the basic force behind all economic activity. Commercial bank deposits increased from 26.718 billion Lebanese pounds at the end of 1980 to 34.709 billion Lebanese pounds by the end of August 1981, that is, an increase of 30 percent. However, this percentage increase does not reflect the actual increase in deposits because it includes foreign currency deposits which were converted into Lebanese currency on the basis of the high exchange rate of the U.S. dollar--which resulted in an inflation of the figure quoted as the sum total of deposits. However, the other element of banking activity which does reflect real growth is loans. Loans increased from 16.004 billion Lebanese pounds at the end of 1980 to 19.6 billion Lebanese pounds by the end of August 1981, that is, an increase of 22.4 percent. This is a big percentage increase, and it is greater than the percentage increase which the Central Bank last year had provided for--which was 20 percent.

These figures bring out the positive side of banking activity, but there is also a negative side which the owners of the banks are talking about. They claim that

profits in 1981 were less than profits in 1980. The reasons they give for this are an increase in banking costs, a decrease in the difference between the creditors' interest rate and the debtors' interest rate after interest rates rose to levels of more than 17 percent, and competition among banks concerning conditions set by banks which has been going on in the Lebanese market.

In spite of the fact that the Lebanese pound's interest rate has gone up to where it is almost as high as the dollar's interest rate, there has still been a continuation of the tendency to convert Lebanese currency into dollars. Foreign currency deposits increased from 10.589 billion Lebanese pounds, at the end of 1980, to 15.906 billion Lebanese pounds by the end of August 1981, that is, an increase of 50 percent. We should bear in mind that this increase includes the difference in rates of exchange into the Lebanese pound. The balance of payments, which showed a definite surplus during 1981 (it is estimated that it will be less than the 1980 surplus, which was estimated at about \$500 million), contributed toward strengthening the position of the Lebanese pound as a result of the continuous influx of capital from Lebanese working abroad.

This abundance of capital, in turn, contributed toward stimulating production. This was reflected by an increase in exports which occurred in spite of the April events. Statistics which were prepared by the Center for Documentation and Studies in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Beirut indicate that there was an increase of 23.5 percent during the first 9 months of 1981 as compared to the same period in 1980. The increase was from 3.056 billion Lebanese pounds to 3.773 billion Lebanese pounds.

There is no doubt that most of the Lebanese exports are accounted for by industrial products. Based on statistics provided by the Ministry of Industry, which are considered to be very modest because they do not include all of the industrial exports, it is reported that during the first 10 months of 1981 Lebanon exported 1.957 billion pounds' worth of industrial products. It was noted that Iraq overtook Saudi Arabia and occupied first place among the nations importing [Lebanese goods]. Iraq imported 708 million Lebanese pounds' worth of goods, that is, 36 percent of all of Lebanon's industrial exports. Saudi Arabia was in second place, having imported 611 million Lebanese pounds' worth of goods, that is, 31 percent [of all Lebanese industrial exports]. This may be attributable to both consumer requirements and non-consumer requirements necessitated by Iraq's war with Iran.

During 1981 importing took place not only through the various legitimate ports, but also through various non-legitimate ports as a result of widespread smuggling operations on a large scale. Imports which came through customs will total only about one-fourth of the actual imports. During the first 10 months [of 1981] they totalled 354 million Lebanese pounds, that is, 40 percent less than imports for the same period during 1980.

The monthly figures for imports coming through customs appear to show that the decrease was accompanied by an escalation in the activities of the non-legitimate ports. On the basis of [normal] development in the activity of importing goods, it was anticipated that imports coming through customs would amount to approximately:

1. 750 million Lebanese pounds, in 1979, instead of 682 million Lebanese pounds.
2. 1.070 billion Lebanese pounds, in 1980, instead of 683 million Lebanese pounds.

3. 1.6 billion Lebanese pounds, in 1981, instead of approximately 400 million Lebanese pounds.

Direct losses due to smuggling alone during the three-year period amounted to 1.655 billion Lebanese pounds, and it is noted that most of the losses occurred during 1981.

Imports through customs represent the basic source of revenues for the government since they constitute approximately 80 percent of the total in indirect taxes and fees and approximately 47 percent of the total in budget revenues. But in 1980 they accounted for only 27 percent of the public revenues and 71 percent of the indirect taxes, and in 1981 they represented only 14 percent of the [public] revenues and 38 percent of the [indirect] taxes.

The Lebanese economy is, as they say, based on "ports and steamships," and the port of Beirut survived the war years by facing up to continual daily challenges and was active to a degree which startled observers, in spite of the fact that many workers in the port fell victim to shooting and rocket shelling. Port activities in 1981 were affected by the April events, and during the first 9 months of the year there was a decrease in the quantity of goods unloaded in the port--from 2,259,000 tons to 1,805,582 tons, that is, a decrease of 20 percent--whereas the quantity of goods loaded in the port increased 25 percent--from 207,000 tons to 258,642 tons.

The Beirut International Airport is the second principal door for the Lebanese economy. It was also affected by the April events, and during the first half of the year it suffered a decrease in activity which amounted to 24 percent. However, this activity increased during the third quarter of the year, when this rate of decrease was brought down to 12.5 percent. The number of incoming airplane passengers totalled 1,030,069 as opposed to 1,176,978 during the first 9 months of 1980. This decrease in activity at the airport meant increased losses for Middle East Airlines (Air Liban). These losses totalled 120 million Lebanese pounds, whereas the company had made profits of 10 million Lebanese pounds in 1980. When making a presentation of the economic activity which took place during 1981, it is necessary to discuss the government's financial situation. In this regard it is sufficient to refer to the continually accumulating budget deficit and the fact that the government is resorting to covering its increasing expenses by means of taking out both domestic and foreign loans. The result has been that the total public debt amounts to approximately 7 billion Lebanese pounds.

From all of these facts one deduces that 1981, economically speaking, was not a particularly encouraging year, and that 1980 was a better year. But since [1981] was the seventh year since the Lebanese war began, could it be that it represents the end of the "7 lean years"? This brings us to the projections for 1982. Observers agree that 1982 will be a year full of political surprises in the Middle East and with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and they expect these surprises to have their effect on Lebanon's internal situation. In light of all of this, Lebanon will provide its own surprise when it elects its new president. For this reason, the entrepreneurs right now are going through a period of expectation and anticipation, wondering what developments will take place. They are conducting their affairs in their commercial, industrial, and financial establishments on the basis of "continuing the status quo," without giving any thought to expanding their interests or implementing new projects.

And finally we should point out one more thing. Everybody now knows that one of the most important objectives of the conspiracy against Lebanon, which has been carried out during the last 7 years, has been the destruction of the Lebanese economy which has grown and prospered under circumstances of economic freedom. Of course this objective has not been attained, and will not be attained, by those who are engaging in the conspiracy. They have been surprised by the Lebanese people's steadfastness, ability to quickly adapt to changes and developments, and their ability to meet all the prerequisites for surviving, working, and producing--both in Lebanon and abroad!

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MAURITANIAN DOMESTIC, INTERNATIONAL SITUATION DISCUSSED

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[Article by Antun 'Abd al-Masih: "Forgotten Mauritania: The Hell of War and the Injustice of Neutrality; Mauritania Finds Unfavorable Economic Results Even in Neutrality"]

[Text] From the window of the airplane coming from Paris, Mauritania seems an endless desert, a distant mirage between the ocean horizon and the dryness of the African coast.

The view slowly narrows until the plane's wheels touch down at Nouakchott Airport to expand reality and memories in the presence of a life that is simple and spontaneous, especially with the regional and international struggles which sweep this western part of the African continent.

Mauritania is going through a critical period such as it has never seen in its history. Although its independence remained doubtful with respect to its neighbor, the Kingdom of Morocco, until the late 1960's and the early 1970's when Mauritania joined the Arab League, this doubt did not have any negative effect on its progress. However, its involvement in regional conflicts--despite its will at times--is having disastrous consequences on its internal stability and economic growth.

Where does Mauritania stand now on what is happening near by and far away on the African continent?

Mauritanians answer openly, "We stand with ourselves. We have no desire for other's land or resources. Our only desire is for the growth of our country."

However, African winds do not blow for Mauritanian ships. The visitor to Mauritania wonders: The conflict in the Western Sahara naturally has an effect on Mauritania, but what is Mauritania's link with the Iraq-Iran war that it is affected by that war?

Nonetheless, the Iraq-Iran war, the Chad problem, and the American-Soviet rivalry to divide the world into spheres of influence have all affected Mauritania. And there are many other examples....

It is not enough for the young country of Mauritania to be content and have no greed in order to remain untouched by the conflicts of others. Its strategic location is all that is necessary for it to be a direct or indirect party to all that happens on the dark continent.

Mauritania's population is no more than a million and a half inhabitants living over a million square meter area. Over 90 percent of its land, which forms the eastern part of the Western Sahara, is uninhabitable, but rich in phosphate. In addition, Algeria's border with the Sahara is only 50 kilometers long, and Morocco's is 500 kilometers; Mauritania's border along the Sahara is more than three times the length of the border between Morocco and the Sahara. Moreover, Mauritania's location makes it a major crossroad in two respects: The first is that it is a strategic location in West Africa overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, even if it is less important than Somalia, which is the strategic center of East Africa. The second respect is that Mauritania separates the northern and southern parts of West Africa, forming a bridge between the Arabs living in the North and the Africans in the South.

This strategic location has given Mauritania great importance in the region and explains why several countries are vying for Mauritania's favor. A Mauritanian politician described this by saying, "Even in the late 1970's, some Mauritania's favored Morocco, others favored Algeria, some sided with Libya or Iraq and others sided with some other country...to the point that we started wondering who was siding with Mauritania!"

In the middle of this explosive regional situation on Mauritania's border, Mauritania celebrated the 21st anniversary of its independence. Approximately 1200 soldiers, one-tenth of Mauritania's armed forces, took part in a military review. In the skies over Nouakchott appeared the only two light fighter planes the air force has following the loss of four planes, two in the Sahara war and two during training. However, foreign military attaches attending the military review were expecting to see certain types of Russian-made SAM anti-aircraft missiles, but neither the missiles nor any heavy machinery appeared. The review was limited to infantry units carrying automatic rifles.

The President, Lt Col Mohamed Khouna Ould Haidalla, delivered a comprehensive speech on this occasion, reviewing Mauritania's status on all different levels. What caught one's attention was his concentrating on the economic and financial situation when he said that the increase in the budget deficit, which will reach about 3 and one-half billion Ouguiya (about \$75 million) by the end of this year "because of the decrease in foreign aid, which amounted to less than 474 million Ouguiya by October 31, 1981, compared to 4 billion Ouguiya for the same period in 1980."

Diplomatic circles in the Mauritanian capital were not surprised by this sudden decrease in the amount of foreign aid, which had its political reasons, both locally and abroad. The reasons for the decrease are Mauritania's position on the Sahara problem, after it signed the Algiers agreement with the Polisario, and its withdrawal from the Sahara.

The Mauritanian President of course discussed the Sahara problem and the war there, referring to the fact that "the continuing struggle between our brothers is a constant source of concern for us (Mauritania), especially since the latest developments show that the great powers intend to internationalize the conflict."

If Mauritania's President did not deny that Mauritania is facing great economic difficulties, the public has expressed these difficulties in a very real way. At the end of the military review, citizen, union and student delegations walked past the presidential stand where the president, ministers, high officials and foreign ambassadors were sitting. Unlike what goes on in many Arab countries, they were carrying

signs to voice their demands, the least of which would land a person in jail in many countries. Some of these demands were: "Free medical care"; "Low rent"; "Wage increases"; "An immediate solution to the transportation problem"; "An end to unemployment and piece work" and "Toward a social housing policy."

If Mauritania realizes the importance of its strategic location, at a time of regional crises in Africa, it also realizes the effects these conflicts have on its political and economic situation. It is therefore trying to keep from getting its fingers burned, but even this situation has bad effects on Mauritania, the least being the decrease in foreign aid, especially Arab aid, at a time when Mauritania needs more aid and attention from its Arab brothers, who still consider it a "forgotten" country.

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